4X4
AUSTRA

TESTED
## FORD BRONCO

iKAMPER
LUCKY COUNTRY ADVENTURES
ISUZU
1HRE·362

REVEALED
## GR SPORT HILUX

TESTED
## GR SPORT LANDCRUISER

# TOURING IN A LUCKY COUNTRY

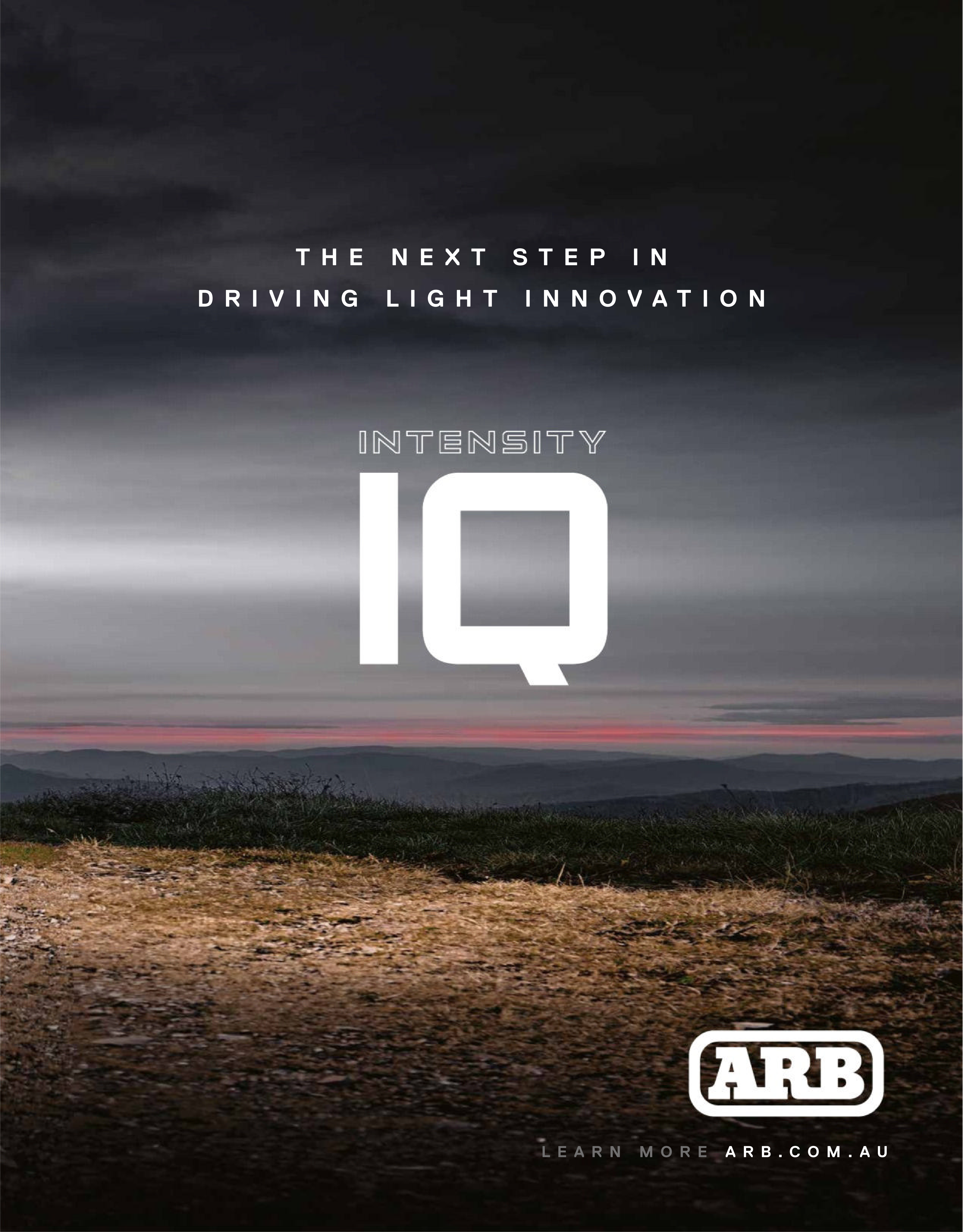
FEB 2023
ISSUE NO.474
$11.95 (NZ $12.95)

+ RACKING UP OUR MU-X & BARRING UP OUR NEW RANGER

VISIT…

LANZAROTE
Caliente.COM

ARB
ARB-1


THE NEXT STEP IN
DRIVING LIGHT INNOVATION
INTENSITY
IQ
ARB
LEARN MORE ARB.COM.AU

Australia's fastest growing bull bar range
RAID
by IRONMAN 4x4
Be ready for every destination
www.ironman4x4.com
4X4ADPS160123

ISUZU
VIC BIT·175
IRONMAN 4X4

MAXXIS
RAZR SHARP. CUTTING EDGE.
RAZR MT772

MAXXISRAZR.COM.AU

## RAZR AT811

MAXXISTyresAustralia @Maxxis.Tyres.Australia Maxxis Tyres Australia

# Contents

FEB 2023

www.facebook.com/4x4aus www.4x4australia.com.au

## 32 HIT FOR SIX

It's westward ho aboard this neat six-wheel Isuzu D-MAX super family camper.

**24**
Why can't we have a Bronco 4x4 like the yanks do?

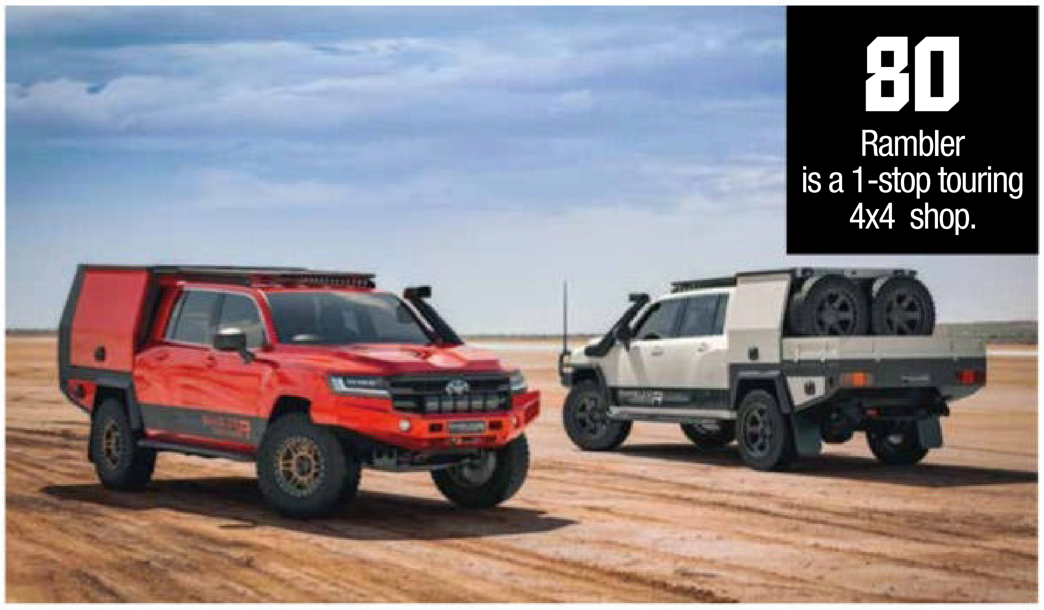
**46**
LC300 GR Sport doing the scrub in style.

**PAGE 110**
Heaps of kit to fill the 4x4 addiction

4X4 AUSTRALIA

**FIND US ONLINE AT 4X4AUSTRALIA.COM.AU**

**72**
Introducing the LC80 panel van, *Frank The Tank.*



**80**
Rambler is a 1-stop touring 4x4 shop.

**84**
Reckon you're good, hey? Try the Widow Maker.

**92**
Treat Cahills Crossing with respect, or else.

## 4CAST

10 4WORD
12 LATEST NEWS FROM THE 4X4 WORLD
16 TRAVEL BULLETIN

## 4X4 DRiVEN

24 2022 FORD BRONCO BLACK DIAMOND
32 CUSTOM: D-MAX X-TERRAIN 6X4
46 2022 TOYOTA LANDCRUISER 300 GR SPORT
72 CUSTOM: 80 SERIES LANDCRUISER
102 CUSTOM: LAND ROVER 110 PERENTIE 6X6
120 READERS' RIGS
122 SHED: PXIII FORD RANGER XLS SPORT

## 4X4 INTERVIEW

80 RAMBLER VEHICLES, QUEENSLAND

## 4X4 EXPLORE

84 WOOLGOOLGA, NEW SOUTH WALES
92 CAHILLS CROSSING, NT

## 4X4 GEAR

58 MU-X BUILD: OZTRAIL 270° AWNING
64 MU-X BUILD: RACKSBRAX AWNING MOUNTS
66 RANGER BUILD: TJM EQUIPMENT
110 NEW STUFF ON THE MARKET
114 COMPANION SOLAR PANEL & POWER STATION
116 ZIGGY PORTABLE GRILL

## 4X4 OPINION

20 TECH TORQUE: FRASER STRONACH
22 FOOTLOOSE: RON MOON

## THE SCORE

124 ALL THE STATS, FIGURES AND PRICES OF EVERY 4X4 YOU CAN BUY

## 4X4 PARTiNG PiC

130 YOUR SHENANIGANS CAUGHT ON FILM

# THE NEW WAY TO STOP ROLL-AWAY

Stop everything. The new Terrain Tamer Electronic Secondary Park Brake Kit for Landcruiser 70 Series Models is here. Able to prevent roll-away instances and automatically engaging when the ignition is off, this is a game changer.

Our new kits support an OE handbrake (not to be used in isolation) and use OE size rotors and pads. There's no need for ADR compliance and the fitting time is 3 hours, with plug and play installation. Utilising the hand brake warning light on the dashboard, our kits are model specific and will not fit other applications.

For information visit **terraintamer.com** or call **1300 888 444**

TERRAIN TAMER 4WD

When Quality Counts

RALLY RAIDER

Powerful four-cylinder GR Sport is the Hilux for the off-road racer in all of us.

# WRAPS OFF GR SPORT HILUX

## TOYOTA AUSTRALIA'S 'DAKAR-INSPIRED' 2023 GR SPORT HILUX LAUNCHED

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS

Fresh off the back of another Dakar win, TOYOTA Australia has pulled the covers off the GR Sport variant of its popular Hilux mid-size ute.

Adding increased levels of power and torque to the wider track and four-wheel disc-brake package of the 2022 Hilux Rogue, to create what the company calls a 'Dakar-inspired' package for its top-of-the-range model.

Toyota has tweaked the 1GD 2.8-litre diesel engine with revised turbocharger and diesel injection to produce 165kW and 550Nm, making it the most powerful four-cylinder diesel-fuelled mid-size ute on the market. The standard Aisin six-speed automatic transmission has also been fettled to give it a more sporting character with a wider torque converter lock-up range, while shift paddles have been added behind the steering wheel for easier manual gear selection.

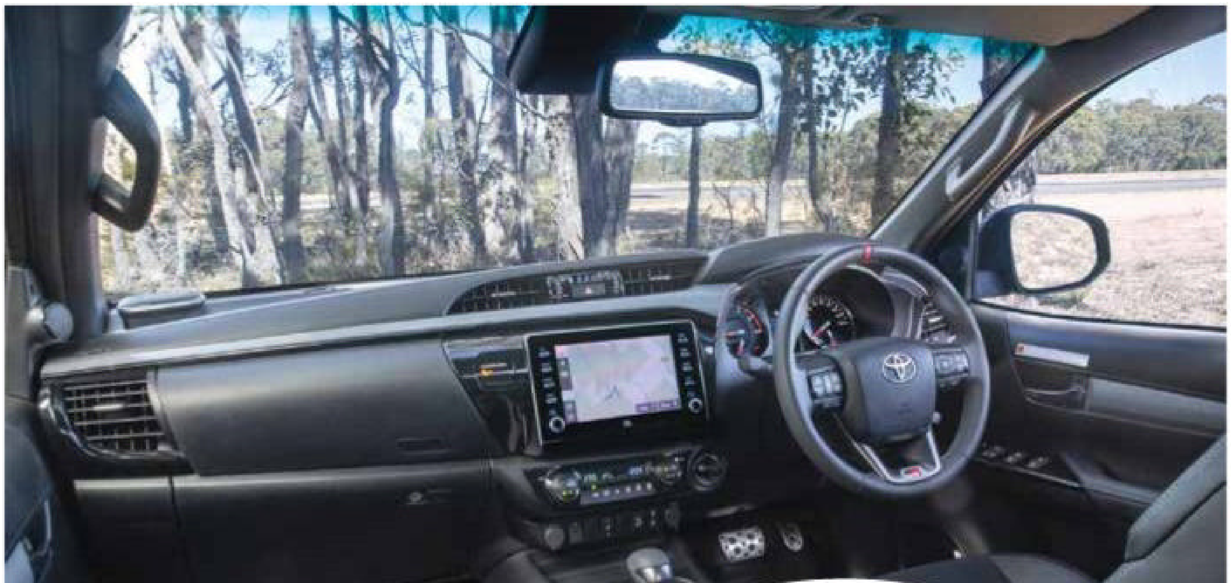
More than just powertrain upgrades, the GR Sport gets the 140mm front and 155mm rear wider wheel track as debuted under the Rogue, with new front control arms and reinforced rear differential housing. As mentioned, the GR Sport also gets the Rogue's excellent four-wheel disc-brake package that impressed us when we drove it back in 2022.

The 2023 GR Sport Hilux rides on 17-inch alloy wheels and all-terrain tyres, while GR-specific monotube shock absorbers and stiffer coil springs enhance the dynamics of the one-tonne ute. Underneath, pundits will find a metal skid plate, rock rails and rear recovery points.

The GR Sport gets a new radiator grille, wheel arch flares and a revised front bumper outside, while inside there are sports pedals, red seatbelts and GR branding on the steering wheel and headrests – woo-hoo!

"Thanks to the extensive involvement of our local designers and engineers, Hilux GR Sport is a fun-to-drive vehicle that will bring new capabilities and excitement to the adventure lifestyles of Australian customers," said Toyota Australia vice president sales, marketing and franchise

**REVISED TURBOCHARGER AND DIESEL INJECTION NOW PRODUCES 165KW AND 550NM, MAKING IT THE MOST POWERFUL FOUR-CYLINDER DIESEL-FUELLED MID-SIZE UTE**



operations, Sean Hanley.

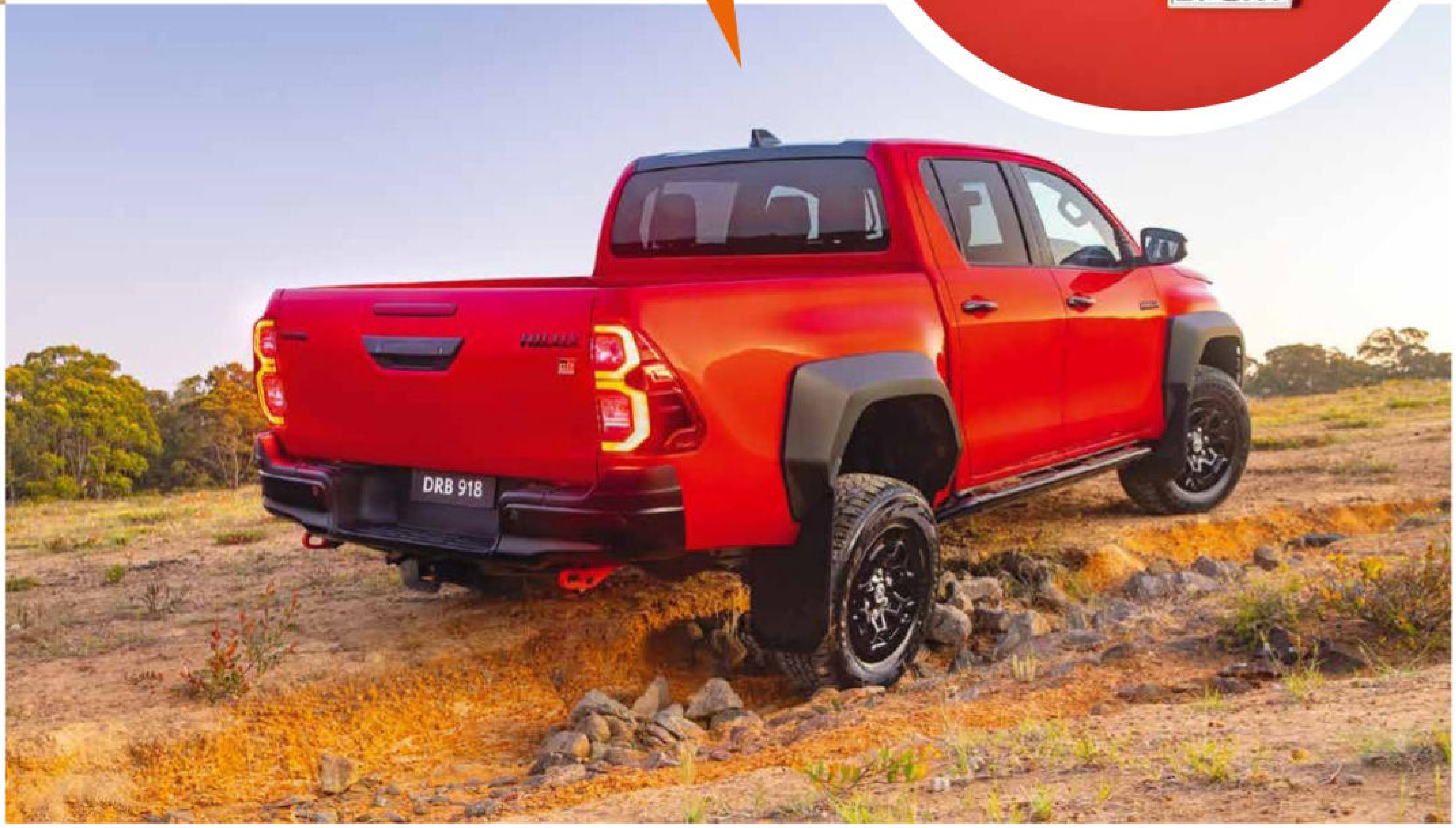
"Hilux GR Sport draws on the spirit of Toyota's Dakar success as a hardcore 4WD that will appeal to customers seeking the quintessential off-road version of Australia's best-selling vehicle," he added.

Toyota is yet to give pricing of the GR Sport Hilux, but expect it to cost more than the $70,200 Hilux Rogue when it goes on sale in the second half of 2023.

HILUX
GR SPORT

**GUN 'LUX**

**There'll be no missing the GR Sport Hilux when it hits the tar and tracks later this year.**



# TERRAIN TAMER OPENS NEW PURPOSE-BUILT SYDNEY STORE

## TERRAIN TAMER'S STATE-OF-THE ART NEW FACILITY HAS A SURPRISE OR TWO WAITING IN THE SHOWROOM

WORDS EVAN SPENCE

RECENTLY, we had the pleasure of attending the opening of Terrain Tamer's brand-new, purpose-built warehouse and showroom, located in Sydney's Marsden Park. This is the first time Terrain Tamer has built a facility from scratch, to better suit the needs of the business and its customers, with the process taking five years from idea to reality, according to general manager Brent Hutchison.

On the evening of the opening, you could see how proud Terrain Tamer staff were of this new building, with state manager Terry Cheal describing it as The Hilton. And I can see why, it's not only a massive leap forward in size, but being a new building, they were able to create a neat and practical facility that the company can grow in to, as well as a state-of-the-art showroom facility for customers to experience. This isn't your average parts shop, that is for sure.

As soon as you walk through the large glass doors, you are greeted by a 40m painting by indigenous artist Kurun Warun, better known as Tio, titled *Dry Water*. This one-off commission tells the story of Terrain Tamer's journey over its lengthy history. It features a series of waterholes, as when you are travelling you need to know where you can find water on your journey. The Terrain Tamer team tells us you need to know where to find parts when exploring the country – this is a really classy touch.

The other exciting news from the evening was announced by off-road icon, John Rooth, who said he wouldn't have a career if it wasn't for Terrain Tamer keeping his equally iconic 40 Series LandCruisers going over the years. Roothy handed over the keys to his vehicle, known as *Milo 2*, to Brent from Terrain Tamer, and this vehicle will now live in the new Sydney showroom for all to see. It's worth a trip down just to have a look at this modified 40 Series LandCruiser that has travelled all over the country.

For those in Sydney,looking for four-wheel drive parts and accessories, or if you want to check out *Milo 2* in the flesh, you can visit this excellent new facility at 5 Ultimo Place, Marsden Park, NSW.

DK
DON KYATT
GROUP OF COMPANIES
TERRAIN TAMER
4WD PARTS
Genuine
Flash Lube
5

**FLASH** Terrain Tamer's new Sydney HQ, with Roothy's LC45 *Milo 2* on permanent display.

mahindra Rise

# S11 4x4
## Dual Cab Ute

Drive Away From
**$38,500*** with Factory Tub

**Standard Features:**
- Apple Car Play & Android Auto
- Reverse Camera
- Turbo Diesel Engine
- 6 Speed Aisin Automatic Transmission
- Low Range Transfer Case
- Rear Mechanical Locking Diff
- Rear Passenger Air Con
- 2 x ISOFIX Child Seat Restraints

PIK-UP
mahindra

5 YEAR | 150K^ WARRANTY ON S11 AT DC PIK UP

4 YEAR | CAPPED^ SERVICE

5 YEAR | ROADSIDE^ ASSIST

*Optional Accessories Shown on Image (Nudge Bar, Black Rims, Wide Side Steps and Sports Bar), Not Included in Drive Away Price ^Terms & Conditions Apply, please see www.mahindra.com.au/ownership for more details. *Valid till 31st Mar 2023

## Tested for over 50,000 Kilometres In Australia

The NEW Automatic Mahindra PikUp has completed over 50,000km of testing in Australia from hot Red Centre testing in the NT, through to Victorian High Country Snow testing, towing, off road and city driving conditions to add further confidence to the durability in Australian Real-World Conditions.

**#beatyour expectations**

**ALL NEW MAHINDRA SCORPIO-N LAUNCHING SOON**

NEW AUTOMATIC
**PIK-UP**

mahindra Rise

# S11 4x4
## Dual Cab Ute

Drive Away From
**$38,500*** with Factory Tub

**Standard Features:**

- Apple Car Play & Android Auto
- Reverse Camera
- Turbo Diesel Engine
- 6 Speed Aisin Automatic Transmission
- Low Range Transfer Case
- Rear Mechanical Locking Diff
- Rear Passenger Air Con
- 2 x ISOFIX Child Seat Restraints

PIK-UP
mahindra

5 YEAR 150K^ WARRANTY ON S11 AT DC PIK UP

4 YEAR CAPPED^ SERVICE

5 YEAR ROADSIDE^ ASSIST

*Optional Accessories Shown on Image (Nudge Bar, Black Rims, Wide Side Steps and Sports Bar), Not Included in Drive Away Price ^Terms & Conditions Apply, please see www.mahindra.com.au/ownership for more details. *Valid till 31st Mar 2023

## Tested for over 50,000 Kilometres In Australia

The NEW Automatic Mahindra PikUp has completed over 50,000km of testing in Australia from hot Red Centre testing in the NT, through to Victorian High Country Snow testing, towing, off road and city driving conditions to add further confidence to the durability in Australian Real-World Conditions.

**#beatyour expectations**

ALL NEW MAHINDRA
**SCORPIO-N**
LAUNCHING SOON

NEW AUTOMATIC
**PIK-UP**

# TRAVEL BULLETIN

## ALL THE LATEST 4X4 NEWS AND EVENTS

**Now is the time to get out and about to enjoy this great land and support the communities. Experienced adventurer Ron Moon has listed a few upcoming highlights, as well as essential track info. As always, check with event organisers before locking in your plans.**

Check for road closures if you're heading to the Snowy River National Park in the Vic High Country.

### SNOWY RIVER NP (VIC)

The 4WD track network in the north-east of the Snowy River National Park has been closed and we're not sure when it'll open.

Tracks affected are the popular Deddick Trail, Bowen Track, Collings Track, Reeds Track, Warm Corners Track, Clem Track, Boundary Track, Warbisco Track, Bowen Link Track, Monkeytop Track, Waratah Flat Rd, Rich Knob Track, Minchin Track and Sun Track.

For the latest, go to www.parks.vic.gov.au

### PERLUBIE & TRACTOR BEACH (SA)

The popular beachside camping spots just out of Streaky Bay on the west side of the Eyre Peninsula have become a bit more official with designated sites, a small fee for overnight stays and bookings required. Sites will be from $15 a night, and numbers will be capped to ensure camping at the sites remain sustainable and don't adversely impact the local environment.

For bookings, see: book.bookeasy.com/agent/eyre-peninsula/8432557

### PLENTY OF TRACKS TO CHOOSE FROM (TAS)

If you are down in Tassie or heading that way and you're looking for some inspiration to fill in your days, or to have a bit of a challenge, or to just see some out-of-the-way places, then check out: parks.tas.gov.au/things-to-do/four-wheel-driving-(4wd)

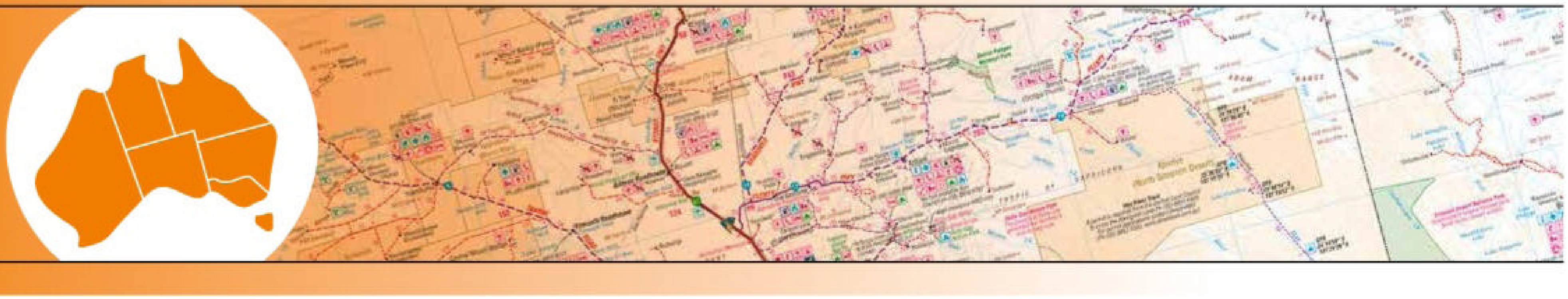
### TOOMPINE PUB (QLD)

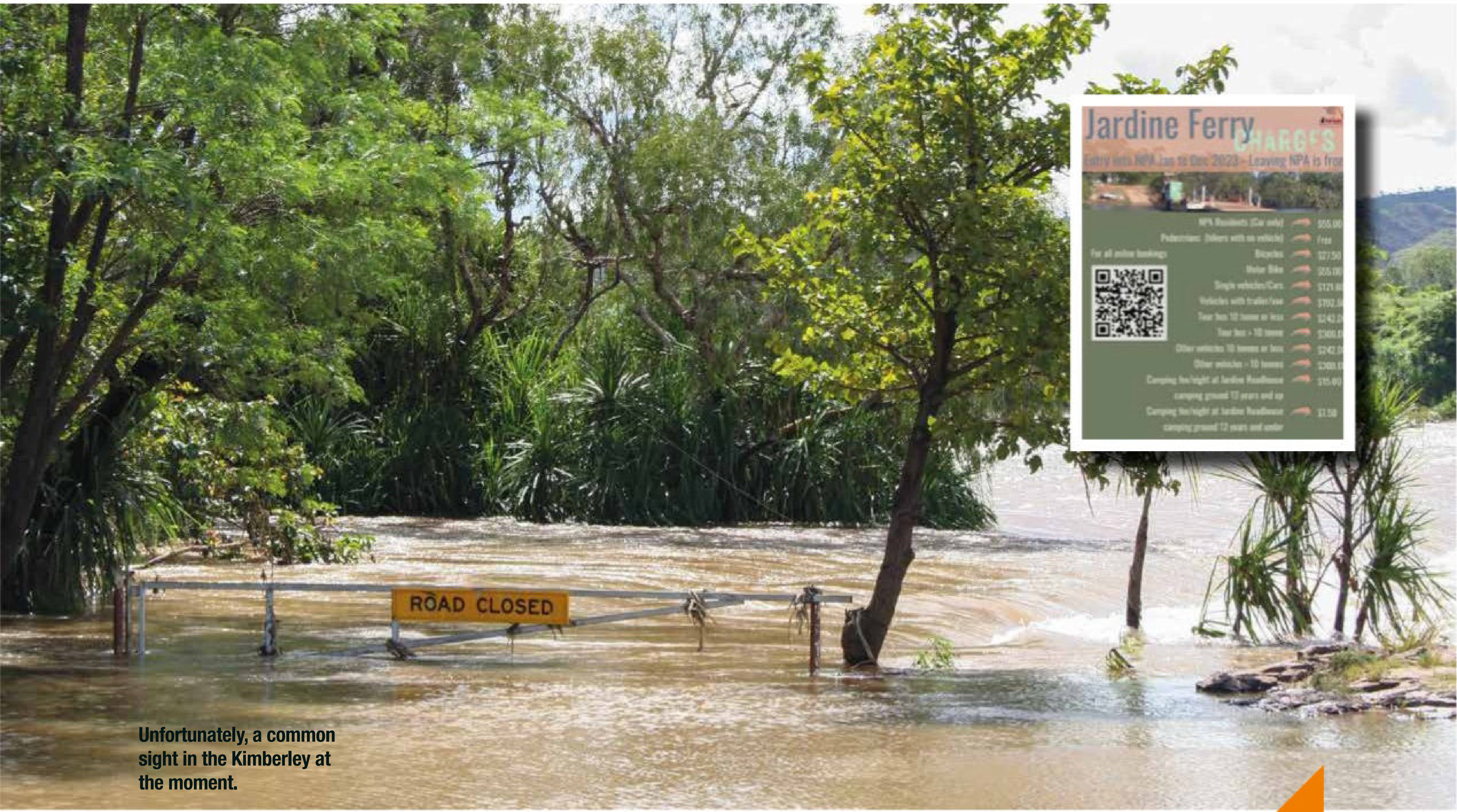
A couple of locals have bought and refurbished the old Toompine Pub and it is now up and running. There's free camping nearby, while the shire has drilled a new bore for improved water quality. So drop in for a coldie!

### DE GREY–MULLEWA STOCK ROUTE (WA)

The De Grey to Mullewa Stock Route in WA has been heritage-listed by the state government. In the 1860s, renowned bushman E.T. Howley pioneered the stock route, and this heritage trail follows the route first gazetted in 1905, commencing at the mouth of the De Grey River and finishing at Mullewa.

The trail takes in three of the southernmost government wells and a natural watering hole, Hughie Rocks. Stretching north for almost 1500km, this route linked the vast pastoral





Unfortunately, a common sight in the Kimberley at the moment.

Jardine Ferry
CHARGES
Entry into NPA Jan to Dec 2023 – Leaving NPA is fro

For all online bookings:

| | |
|---|---|
| NPA Residents (Car only) | $55.00 |
| Pedestrians (hikers with no vehicle) | Free |
| Bicycles | $27.50 |
| Motor Bike | $55.00 |
| Single vehicles/Cars | $121.0 |
| Vehicles with trailer/van | $192.5 |
| Tour bus 10 tonne or less | $242.0 |
| Tour bus > 10 tonne | $308.0 |
| Other vehicles 10 tonne or less | $242.0 |
| Other vehicles > 10 tonne | $308.0 |
| Camping fee/night at Jardine Roadhouse camping ground 12 years and up | $15.40 |
| Camping fee/night at Jardine Roadhouse camping ground 12 years and under | $3.50 |

properties of the Murchison, Pilbara and the Gascoyne areas.

For a bit of a guide, visit: library.cgg.wa.gov.au/Profiles/library/Assets/ClientData/De_Grey_-_Mullewa_Stock_Route_Trail_booklet.pdf

## FLOOD CAMERAS AT ROAD CROSSINGS (QLD)

To get a better idea of what the rivers and streams are doing up on Cape York and if they are passable or not, there are now flood cameras located on each major stream crossing. To have a look, check out: qldtraffic.qld.gov.au/cameras.html

## JARDINE FERRY CHARGES (QLD)

See the top-right inset for the latest in charges for the ferry across the Jardine River up on Cape York.

Brisbane
Darwin
Sydney
Alice Springs
Canberra
Perth
Melbourne

## KIMBERLEY ACCESS (WA)

With all of the floodwaters moving through the Kimberley and cutting off roads and communities, you'll need to keep a watch on the road conditions to see when roads such as the Gibb River Road open and what sort of condition it's in.

For the East Kimberley: swek.wa.gov.au/services/roads-drainage/road-conditions.aspx

For Derby and the West Kimberley, visit: sdwk.wa.gov.au/visitors/road-conditions.aspx.

MSA 4X4

PREMIUM CANVAS

SEATCOVERS

WITH INTEGRATED LUMBAR SUPPORT!

WHEN ONLY THE BEST WILL DO

MSA 4X4 has created a canvas seat cover that is durable enough to withstand life's adventures, yet still soft enough to be comfortable for the occupants.

GUARANTEE LIFETIME GUARANTEE

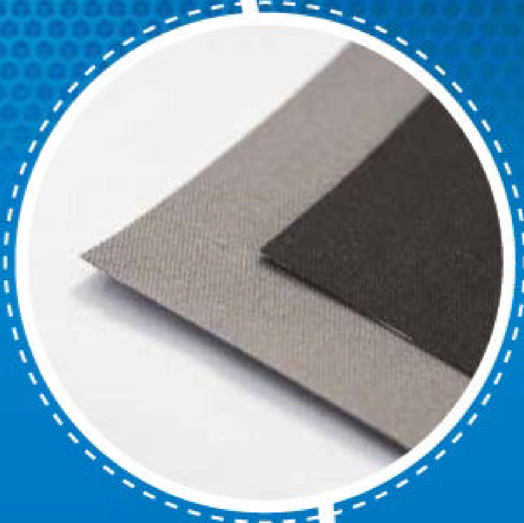
MATCH A VEHICLE TO A MSA 4X4 CANVAS SEAT COVER

*Scan the QR Code to view the price list*

MSA4X4.COM.AU | GEAR FOR LIFE

Available through our 800+ stockists network Australia wide.

**The best fit canvas seat covers available for 4WD vehicles.** Guaranteed touring comfort. Guaranteed not to move or crease. Made from specifically designed heavy duty Polyester and Cotton Blend canvas, delivering maximum comfort and durability for 4WD touring



**Reinforced high wear areas for extra longevity.** Polycotton layer, Canvas layer and additional Canvas layer in high wear areas.

**100% Water, dirt, mud, kid and pet proof.** Manufactured from specially designed 12oz Teflon impregnated canvas.

**Polycotton lined** for maximum protection of vehicle seats, providing a complete barrier between the canvas and the soft factory seat.

DO NOT MACHINE WASH

DO NOT SCRUB

DO NOT USE DETERGENT

# FULLY CERTIFIED AS ADR COMPLIANT

Full crash testing completed.

CRASH TESTED & ADR COMPLIANT
LEADING THE WAY
MSA 4X4 ACCESSORIES
LET'S TALK SAFETY
EXAMPLE

TEST CERTIFICATE

MSA 4X4 ACCESSORIES SEAT COVER

TOYOTA HILUX 2016

Seats fitted with torso - side airbags

# THE *ONLY* CANVAS SEAT COVERS WITH A *INTEGRATED* AIR LUMBAR SUPPORT SYSTEM* AND A *LIFETIME GUARANTEE*

With the unique, fully adjustable air-inflated bladder insert, support can be positioned perfectly where needed. The supplied air valve allows the bladder to be inflated as much or as little as required.

**Integrated Air Lumbar Support System available on new model front sets only.*

MSA 4X4 ACCESSORIES

# TECH TORQUE

**FRASER STRONACH**

## IS DIESEL DOOMED? IT'S A HYBRID FUTURE

ELECTRIC Vehicles (EVs) may be making all the headlines when it comes to the future of the automotive industry, but it will be hybrids making up the significant numbers in the future transition away from traditional petrol and diesel cars. What's more, hybrids are set to evolve away from the now relatively common non-plug-in models towards an increasing adoption of plug-in technology, which is the logical halfway step between cars that rely entirely on their internal combustion (IC) engines and EVs.

By EVs I'm referring to battery EVs, as it's hard to see how hydrogen fuel-cell EVs will ever become mainstream given the difficulty in creating widespread hydrogen distribution infrastructure.

The problem ahead for the auto industry is the proposed ban on the sale of new diesel and petrol cars in many major markets around the world within the 2030-35 timeframe. Right now, this may be no more than political flag-waving but, nevertheless, the writing is on the climate-change wall.

How things will play out in terms of hard legislation when the time comes is difficult to say but will essentially hinge on the treatment of hybrids. Conventional non-plug-in hybrids seemingly won't avoid the bans but plug-in hybrids that have a substantial enough EV-only range to satisfy a regulatory standard may be able to be classified as EVs. Done right, a plug-in hybrid should be able to do most of what's asked of it in terms of a daily, limited-distance driving regime without having to resort to using the IC engine, which would only come in to play for longer distance driving. Hybrids that use a small IC engine to power an electrical generator to charge the battery and thereby extend the driving range – without that IC engine directly driving the wheels – may also get around any bans.

Thanks to Toyota, its Prius hybrids have been around for more than 20 years, but without a plug-in facility they can't close the environmental loop where cars run on electricity generated via solar or wind power. Non-plug-in hybrids are essentially a more efficient version of a petrol (or diesel) car as they use the electric side of their powertrains to recapture, store and reuse some of the energy from their fossil-fuel source that would otherwise be lost.

Nevertheless, the union of an electric motor to a IC engine is a happy one in any sort of hybrid, as the electric motor is at its strongest where the IC engine is at its weakest and least fuel efficient, namely in the initial effort in getting a car moving from stationary. In effect, the electric motor is used to fatten up the IC engine's torque output off idle and at low engine speeds.

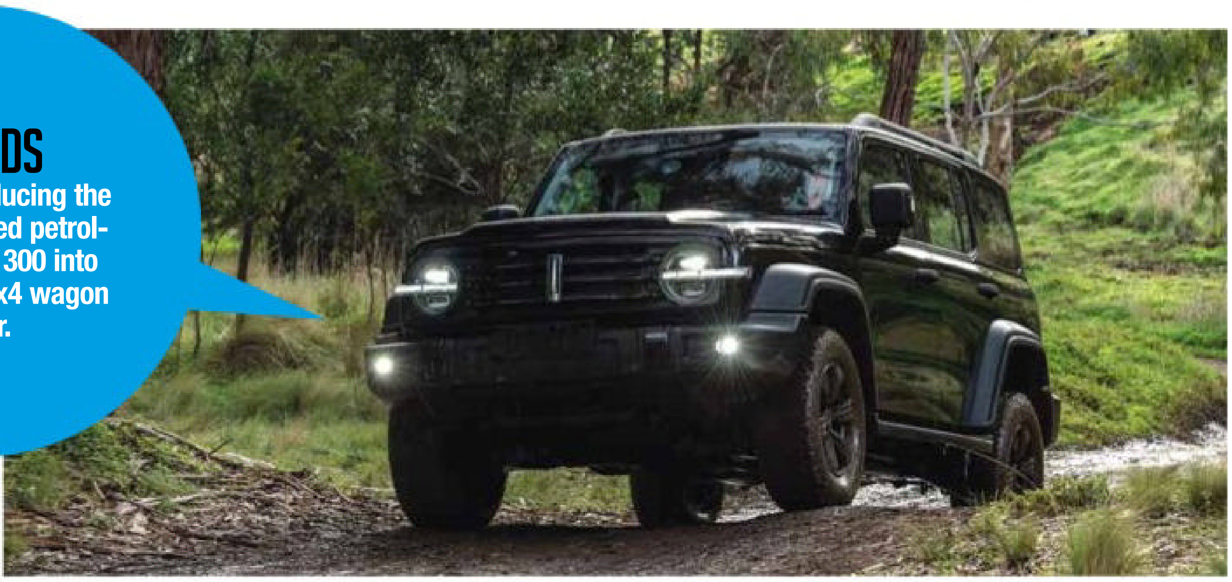
A hybrid's key problem is finding space for both the IC engine and the electric motor/generator, which is the key component of the hybrid's energy recycling system. There's also the problem of finding room for the hybrid system's battery as well as the fuel tank, and all without compromising passenger or luggage space.

The fuel tank/battery packaging problem is compounded by the lithium-ion batteries in question being less energy dense than petrol or diesel fuels, so you don't get as much energy from the battery as you would from a same-size diesel or petrol tank.

By their nature plug-in hybrids have much bigger batteries than non-plug-ins, given their external charging means you can make the battery as big as you like within obvious constraints, which brings the obvious benefit of more range in EV-only mode, a key goal in all this endeavor.

The positive in terms of packaging is that plug-in hybrids will get away with smaller IC engines with four or fewer cylinders and capacity capped around two litres, even for powering bigger and heavier vehicles, 4x4s included. Petrol will be the favoured fuel while turbocharging, which helps a small capacity engine produce the torque of a larger engine, and will be standard practice. Electric superchargers could be used, too.

Diesel-electric hybrids will most likely not be in the mix, even if the likes of Range Rover and Porsche (with its Cayenne) have gone down this road before thanks to a ready-made hybrid transmission with an electric motor/generator supplied by German transmission specialist ZF, which made it relatively simple to create these particular diesel-electric hybrids. Diesel engines don't hybridise as well as petrol engines as there is less energy to recoup given a diesel's much higher compression ratios mean higher pumping losses. With ever-tighter emissions regulations, diesel's days are numbered anyway.



**HYBRIDS**
GWM is introducing the hybrid-powered petrol-electric Tank 300 into the popular 4x4 wagon sector.

# VISION AUTO

TRU-FIT

## REPLACEMENT CARPET & VINYL FLOORINGS

**Fully heat moulded to each vehicle's floor shape, available for most vehicles in 14 carpet colours in loop, plush & super plush carpets and 9 hard wearing vinyl colours**
***CUT LENGTHS ALSO AVAILABLE***

## A RANGE OF UNDERLAY & INSULATION

- Heavy Duty Felt
- Premium Sound proofing
- Waterproof Underlay

## SOUND INSULATION

- Australian Made
- Premium automotive sound & Heat insulation Self adhesive
- No toxic odors / allergy sufferers safe Used by leading truck and bus manufacturers

SOUND SHIELD

## UNDER BONNET INSULATION

Custom Moulded & Universal
Under Bonnet Insulation

## UNIQUE MATS

**CUSTOM SHAPE FLAT OR MOULDED MATS.**

GREEN MACHINE

Protection mats perfectly made to suit a large range of vehicles from 1940's to now.
*Custom embroidery available.*

**1 / 6 AIRLIE AVE, DANDENONG,**
**VIC 3175 PH 03 9792 2333**
**INFO@TRUFITCARPETS.COM.AU**

**VISION AUTO PTY/LTD**
**WWW.TRUFITCARPETS.COM.AU**

# FOOT LOOSE

**RON MOON**

## BUG … EARED!

IT WASN'T funny, even though most people laugh outright or at least chuckle when you first tell the story. In this case it was a bug that crawled into my ear while camped on the Starcke Track, about a five-hour drive north of Cooktown. I'm prompted to tell this yarn as bugs in ears have been hitting the headlines of late, and in every case it's anything but funny and the first aid, especially out in the bush, seems to be little known. And from what I've read in recent days, camping, especially in summer or up north when its pleasantly warm, is the peak time for bugs to crawl into ears.

In my case it was the middle of the night when I woke with a bit of a start and the quick realisation that something had crawled in my ear. Within a few seconds it felt like a herd of Genghis Khan's mounted warriors were charging around my eardrum, creating a hell of a lot of noise that was impossible to ignore, and the sharp little feet of whatever was in my ear was a little painful. Still, it was the noise and pressure on my eardrum that was quickly driving me insane.

Waking my son Trent up (we were on one of his Moon Tours up the Cape) we tried the old torchlight-at-the-end-of-the tunnel trick to try and lure said bug out of my ear. By this stage I was prepared to drive back to Cooktown in the dark to seek some help.

We didn't have any tweezers, which in hindsight was a good thing as every expert and website on such matters strongly suggests you don't use them as they can easily hole the eardrum – and then you are in more strife than a cat in a dog kennel.

While I walked in circles shaking my head, Trent got on the satphone and in touch with the Royal Flying Doctor Service. The doc on call knew what to do, "Just pour some oil into his ear – the bug, whatever it is, wont like it and it'll go even crazier for a while, but the oil will kill it!"

Baby oil or similar is the preferred oil, but we didn't have any with us so olive oil or cooking oil will do, we were told. At this stage I would have tried engine oil.

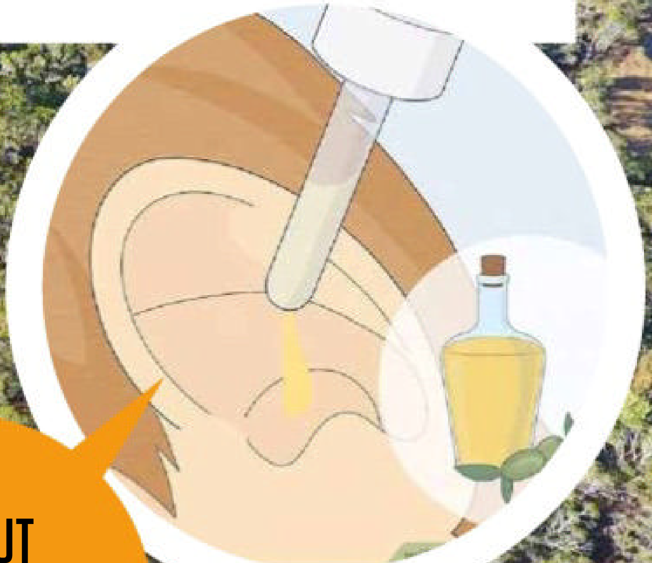
With a good dose of oil poured in my ear, the bug, as the doc had indicated, went a little crazy but then the noise subsided and stopped. Unless you've experienced it, you couldn't believe the relief I felt.

Then it's a matter of tilting the head to the affected side and letting the oil and hopefully the bug fall out. When it did, I was surprised how small it was. If such a little insect can cause so much angst I really felt for the people in the recent news stories that had a 2cm-long cockroach crawl in their ears; now that would feel *very* noisy and disconcerting. But maybe I'm just a wimp!

The moral of the story is, if it happens to you, use some oil; *do not* use tweezers or the like to try and remove the bug.

How to stop them crawling in your ear? Keep your tent, swag or camper closed up to keep bugs out; if there are any around, give the enclosure a spray with some insect killer. Apart from that and short of wearing ear plugs, you are at their mercy. Just keep some baby oil or cooking oil handy!

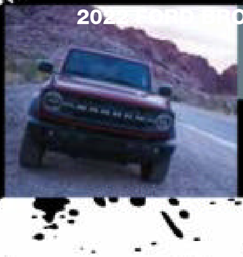
For more information, see: www.healthline.com/health/bug-in-ear



**BUG OUT**

Best and safest way to get a critter out of your ear is to drown it in oil.

GEARED 4 OVERLANDING
FOT·04B
Marks 4WD
Visit marks4wd.com
TAKING YOU FURTHER SINCE 1979



WORDS AND PHOTOS MARK BOXER

# BACK IN BLACK

## WE STILL CAN'T BUY A NEW FORD BRONCO IN AUSTRALIA SO WE HEADED TO THE USA TO SEE WHAT WE'RE MISSING OUT ON. WE CAME BACK WANTING IT EVEN MORE

WITHIN 10km of driving the 2022 Ford Bronco, I had to ask: "Why the hell isn't Ford bringing these to Australia?"

Let's be honest, Ford can't go wrong with any 4x4 riding on the T6 platform at the moment, and the Bronco would complement the Ranger and Everest models in Australia as being a better off-road and lifestyle alternative.

I must admit I was a little disappointed when the kind lady at the counter at LAX handed me the keys to the big red Bronco Black Diamond, as I was expecting a Bronco Raptor for this drive. While the Raptor is the off-road hero of the Bronco model range with its 37-inch tyres, lockers and 3.0-litre V6 engine, the Black Diamond version was much lower and slimmer than the Raptor which would have been a rather tight fit in the hotel car park.

The plan for the Bronco was to do a road trip that would be every car junkie's dream run to the SEMA show in Las Vegas and, Raptor or not, this Bronco would get the job done. So after three days of seeing the sights around LA, I jumped in the car and headed east.

The drive from LA to Vegas takes about a five hours on the highway. With some stops, I was able to take in some of the scenery as well as check out some very cool and interesting vehicles that were also heading in the same direction.

Being a soft-top, the Bronco did have some road and wind noise, but that's really unavoidable when there isn't a sheet of metal separating you from the sky. The Bronco does come with a hardtop option, but this particular model not only has a fully removable roof, but you can also unbolt the doors completely and the process is very simple. If you check out the Bronco section of the Ford website, there's nothing short of seven different options for soft- and hard-top variants. Nobody is going home unhappy with their choice!

It's no secret that Ford has targeted the Jeep market with the Bronco, so there are many similarities with the Jeep Wrangler in its features.

# POWERTRAIN

THE Black Diamond doesn't have the same 3.0-litre V6 as the Bronco Raptor, but it does come with the option of a more-than-capable 2.7-litre EcoBoost V6 that also has twin turbos. As standard, they come with a 2.3-litre EcoBoost inline four-cylinder which makes around 220kW and 440Nm on premium fuel, but if you chip in an extra US$1895 (AU$2700 approx.) you get the V6 which makes an extra 22kW and 122Nm.

For manual gearbox lovers, the sad news is the seven-speed manual is only available with the four-cylinder engine. Once you step up to the V6, the only gearbox option is the 10-speed auto; but to be honest, with so many cupholders and buttons to press, having to manually shift gears just adds to the driving effort in a car which is already pretty easy to drive.

There is an option to go for full- or part-time 4x4, but the car I had was part-time. The Black Diamond comes with a 4.46:1 ratio locking rear diff, but for an additional US$5290 (AU$7500 approx.) you can go to a 4.7:1, but it means you have to option for full-time 4x4. To be honest, it felt very good and I doubt that, unless you were planning on going full SEMA spec with a set of 40-inch crawlers, you'd need to change it.

# ON-ROAD

I WAS impressed with the power and the way it drove. One of the big selling points with the Bronco are the seven GOAT modes, which stands for 'Goes Over Any Terrain'. These consist of Normal and Eco (for when the next gas station is a little farther away) which are great for cruising and chilling out, right through to Rock Crawl for when there's a closer gas station but via a scary canyon pass to get there.

The modes are all tweakable to suit your style, but the whole system is intuitive and works well at taking the thinking out of it. Note, the Bronco misses out on Baja mode, although it's similar to the Sand mode.

NW 65°
0
0.8
RPMx1000
MPH
3930.5mi
49mi to E
P R N D M

ON THE HANDFUL OF OPPORTUNITIES I DID GET IT INTO ROCK CRAWL MODE, IT SEEMED QUITE EFFORTLESS TO DRIVE AND MORE THAN CAPABLE

# OFF-ROAD

I'LL be honest in saying I didn't really allow myself enough time to properly experience the Black Diamond off-road. Having said that, on the handful of opportunities I did get it into Rock Crawl mode, it seemed quite effortless to drive and more than capable.

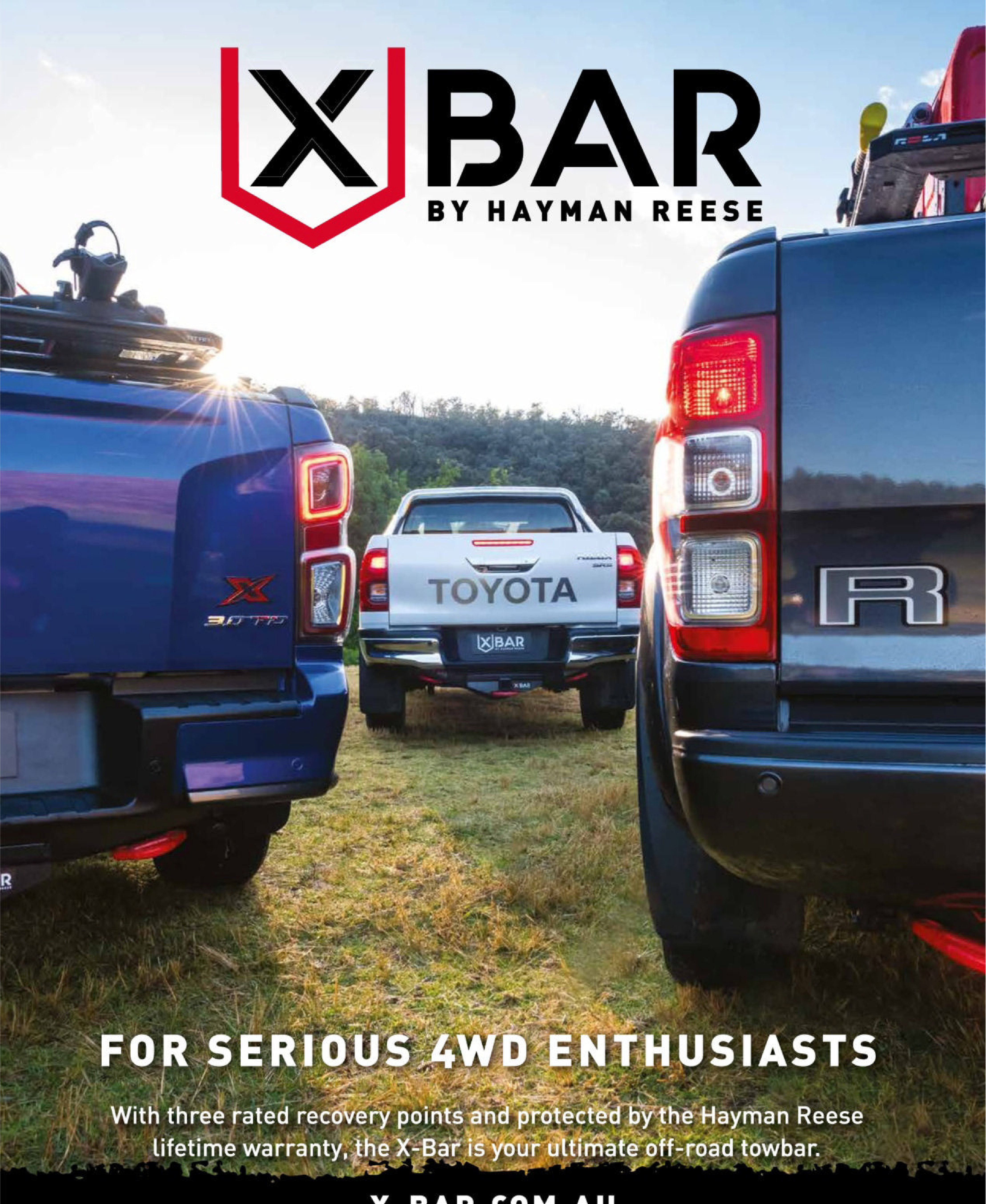
Also, with almost every second booth in the 4x4 hall at SEMA having its own variant of a heavily modified Bronco, there's no doubt that, with the aftermarket parts available already, you could pretty much pick up a car on Monday and have it ready to compete at King of the Hammers by Friday afternoon. With or without carbon panels.

# INTERIOR

IT WOULD be hard to find a late-model Ford with a bad interior and, given the Black Diamond is very much focused on heading off-road, it does come ready for action with some great features. The first thing you notice are those great chunky Bronco grab handles which are a big help off-road, not to mention for getting in and out once you've fitted a suspension lift and big tyres. The dash itself has a more modest eight-inch touchscreen compared to other Ford models such as the new Ranger and Everest, but it has everything you need.

Without going into too much detail with all of the electronic bells and whistles, as well as the safety features and CarPlay options, it's important to note that Ford's intention for this car is to aim it at people who like adventure and who are not afraid to get a bit of mud here and there. On the inside, there's rubberised flooring and removable drain plugs, so you can easily wash away your sins after a big weekend. Then, for those who like to carry rechargeable gadgets and tools, there are 12V charging points and USB ports in the front and rear of the car, including 12V points in the cargo area. Right at the back when you open the swing-out door, there's also a clever retractable shelf that can handle 120kg and would come in handy for all manner of activities.

FORD'S INTENTION FOR THIS CAR IS TO AIM IT AT PEOPLE WHO LIKE ADVENTURE AND WHO ARE NOT AFRAID TO GET A BIT OF MUD HERE AND THERE



X BAR
BY HAYMAN REESE

FOR SERIOUS 4WD ENTHUSIASTS

With three rated recovery points and protected by the Hayman Reese lifetime warranty, the X-Bar is your ultimate off-road towbar.

X-BAR.COM.AU

# EXTERIOR

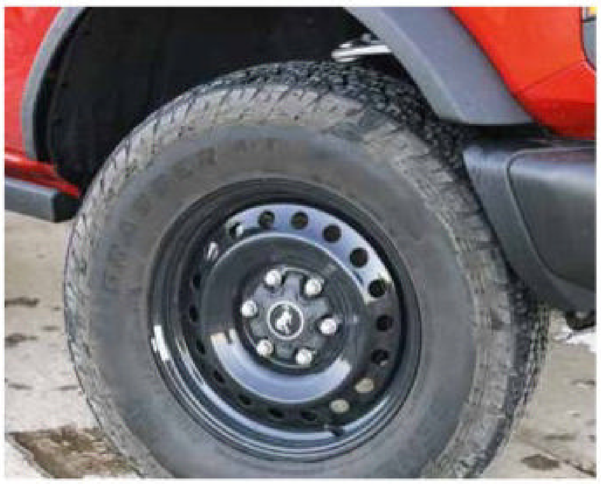
WHEN Toyota released the FJ Cruiser, I was lucky enough to head off on a magazine shoot where it was put through its paces against an old BJ40. Toyota's attempt at making somewhat of a retro version of the old 40 was definitely a good attempt, but Ford has nailed it better, albeit being a few years farther down the track. They have had plenty of practice with designing retro-looking Mustangs, though.

Features wise, aside from the big and unmissable BRONCO lettering on the black-moulded grille, the factory daytime running lights and LED fog lamps are a great touch, not to mention the blacked-out door handles and other non-chrome features.

Black Diamond buyers get a number of other cool features to suit their adventurous styles. Underneath, there are bash plates at the front and rear, protecting most of the vital components, as well as a set of tougher-than-they-look rock rails protecting the sill panels.

On the front you can option up a heavy duty modular bumper which is configurable to your needs and can accommodate anything from lighting to a dealer-fitted winch. It also comes standard with two tow hooks on the front and one on the rear.

I'm still not sure if I love or hate the fact it comes standard with steel wheels. Essentially, you're not going to destroy them as much as expensive alloy wheels when you're bashing in the rocks, but they do look a bit cheap. They also come with much smaller 32-inch tyres than the Raptor which has 37-inch tyres fitted standard, so there's a big difference in ground clearance.



# VERDICT

IF I'm going to be honest, I'd still love to drive the Bronco Raptor. By all accounts it's an absolute weapon and, with those big, wide guards and 37-inch tyres, I would have looked like a total badass driving the streets of LA wearing my expensive sunglasses. Regardless, I did enjoy driving the Black Diamond and it was much nicer than expected, even though my expectations definitely weren't low.

Would I own one? Yes, but I'd fit it with big rubber and option it up more. However, as a get-in-and-drive car that you can collect the groceries in on Wednesday then hit the trails in on the weekend, it ticks all the boxes.

A small feature I really like which doesn't add to the driving experience in any way are the small touches inside and out where it says "since 1966" (Jeep does the same but has a few more years of bragging rights). Ford is obviously proud of the Bronco's heritage and it has done a great job of doing it justice.

| | 2022 FORD BRONCO BLACK DIAMOND |
|---|---|
| ENGINE | 2.7L V6 EcoBoost |
| MAX POWER | 243kW |
| MAX TORQUE | 556Nm |
| TRANSMISSION | 10-speed auto |
| 4X4 SYSTEM | Part-time 4x4 |
| CONSTRUCTION | Four-door on ladder-frame chassis |
| FRONT SUSPENSION | Independent via wishbones and coil springs |
| REAR SUSPENSION | Solid axle w/ coil springs |
| TYRES | 275/70R17 |
| KERB WEIGHT | 2238kg |
| SEATS | 5 |
| FUEL TANK | 79L |
| PRICE | USD$40,940 (starting price, 4-door) |

# AUSSIE OWNERSHIP

FOR now, Ford Australia says it has no plans to bring the Bronco here. Yes, some have spotted an oddly plated and LHD Bronco making its way around Victoria, but Ford Australia did a lot of the engineering development of the Bronco here as the lead team on the T6 platform.

ARB also has a development LHD Bronco in Australia as the official factory-backed supplier for accessories for the Bronco in the USA, in much the same way as it is for the Ranger and Everest here.

Ford's official line is that the Bronco was developed purely as a LHD vehicle, even though it does ride on the same chassis/platform as our Ranger and Everest. With Ford about to restart converting and selling F-150 trucks here in Australia, there's no reason they couldn't do the Bronco as well, providing there's enough demand for it.

Melbourne's American Vehicle Sales has said it will be looking at getting approval for and selling converted Broncos in Australia. It has already converted a few models at its Autogroup International facility for other RHD markets, so watch this space for more on the progress of that.

iKAMPER
CORE
1HRE·36
CORE
CORE

SIX AND OUT SIX AND OUT

# 6 and out!

### THIS SUPER-SPECCED D-MAX CLEARS THE BOUNDARY WHEN IT'S TIME TO UP STUMPS AND HEAD ON

WORDS + PHOTOS BRAD MISKIEWICZ

YOU see it more often than not on the holiday trail. Dual cabs with overloaded canopies, or swaying wagons loaded to the gunwales, stressing the chassis and suspension well past any reasonable GVM limit. We all know there's only so much four wheels can take, given all that extra load needs to be supported by the often overlooked axle bearings doing their best not to explode on some remote track between paradise and the parts store.

In the case of the 2021 D-MAX you see here, Callum and Nicole McDevitt have plans to do some serious extended touring, but with daughter Mackenzie also in tow they wanted to make it a little more comfortable than a swag, fridge and gas stove. This, of course, was going to level up their tonnage, so they chose to acknowledge the elephant in the room by realising a simple spring and shock upgrade wasn't going to achieve what they had in store, especially when towing a fully loaded caravan nudging nearly four tonnes. Not only that, but it was all going to require a little more mumbo to shift it too.

After punting around in a 2015 D-MAX LS-U both Callum and Nicole were pretty happy with the Isuzu product, but weren't completely set on just grabbing the newest model again. They spent time looking through the usual long-haul options, which included LandCruisers, American trucks, and even a bigger upscale to a light truck, but in the end the features and looks of the newer D-MAX in X-Terrain trim had them frothing for one in a Volcanic Amber hue. They just needed to make a few adjustments before they set off on tour.

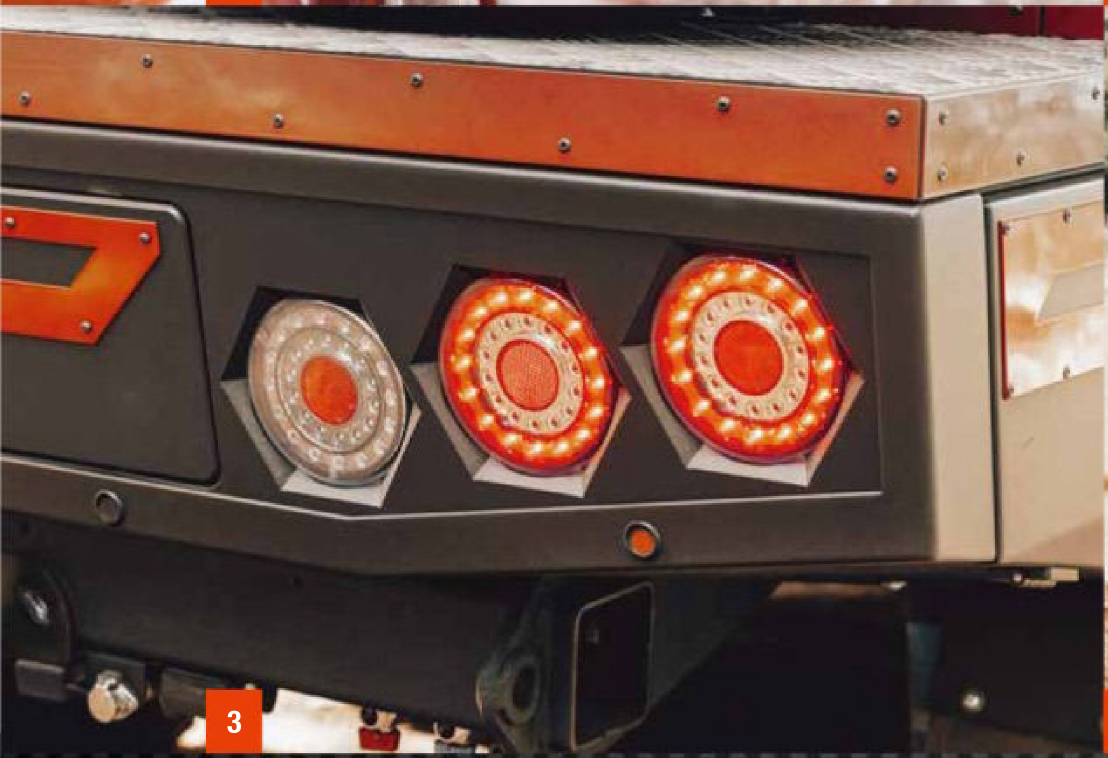
"We wanted it to be capable of touring around Aus, taking on the odd track or two, beach four-wheel driving and being able to sustain a couple of weeks off-grid," said Callum. "To be able to unhook the van and go more remote with the car but still be comfortable and self-sufficient if needed."

LUCKY COUNTRY ADVENTURES
1HRE·362

1

2

COUNTRY ADVENTURES


3

4

1. Keeping towing their caravan legal, a pair of extendable Clearview Compact towing mirrors allow easy vision of what's happening behind.

2. Rhino-Rack Pioneer Platform is mounted with a Core custom backbone mounting system, including a 42-inch Stedi light bar, four Stedi mini LED light bars and four side RGB party lights.

3. Recessed LED tail-lamps have become a staple part of the Core brand.

4. A full complement of eight ROH Vapour wheels fitted with Falken Wildpeak AT3W in a 265/70R17 sizing.

**THE FEATURES AND LOOKS OF THE BRAND NEW D-MAX IN X-TERRAIN TRIM HAD THEM FROTHING FOR ONE IN A VOLCANIC AMBER HUE**

ISUZU
WESTERN AUSTRALIA
1HRE·362
nva

## HUSTLE AND GO

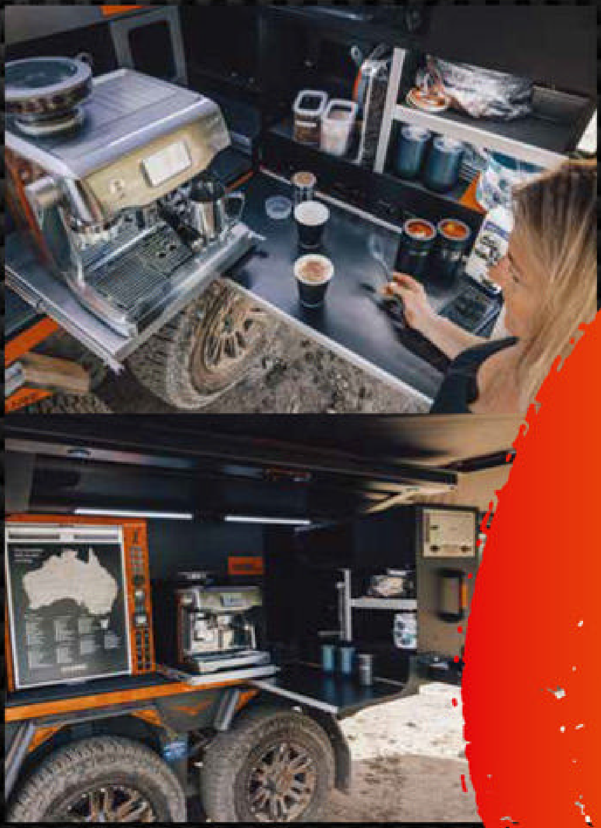
HARD to miss and mounted on its own pull-out tray is the full-sized Breville Oracle Touch coffee machine. It would be easy to think there might have been some over-indulgence with such a top-of-the-line bit of kit in a 4x4, but there was method to the madness.

"It started as a little side hustle idea," the McDevitts tell us.

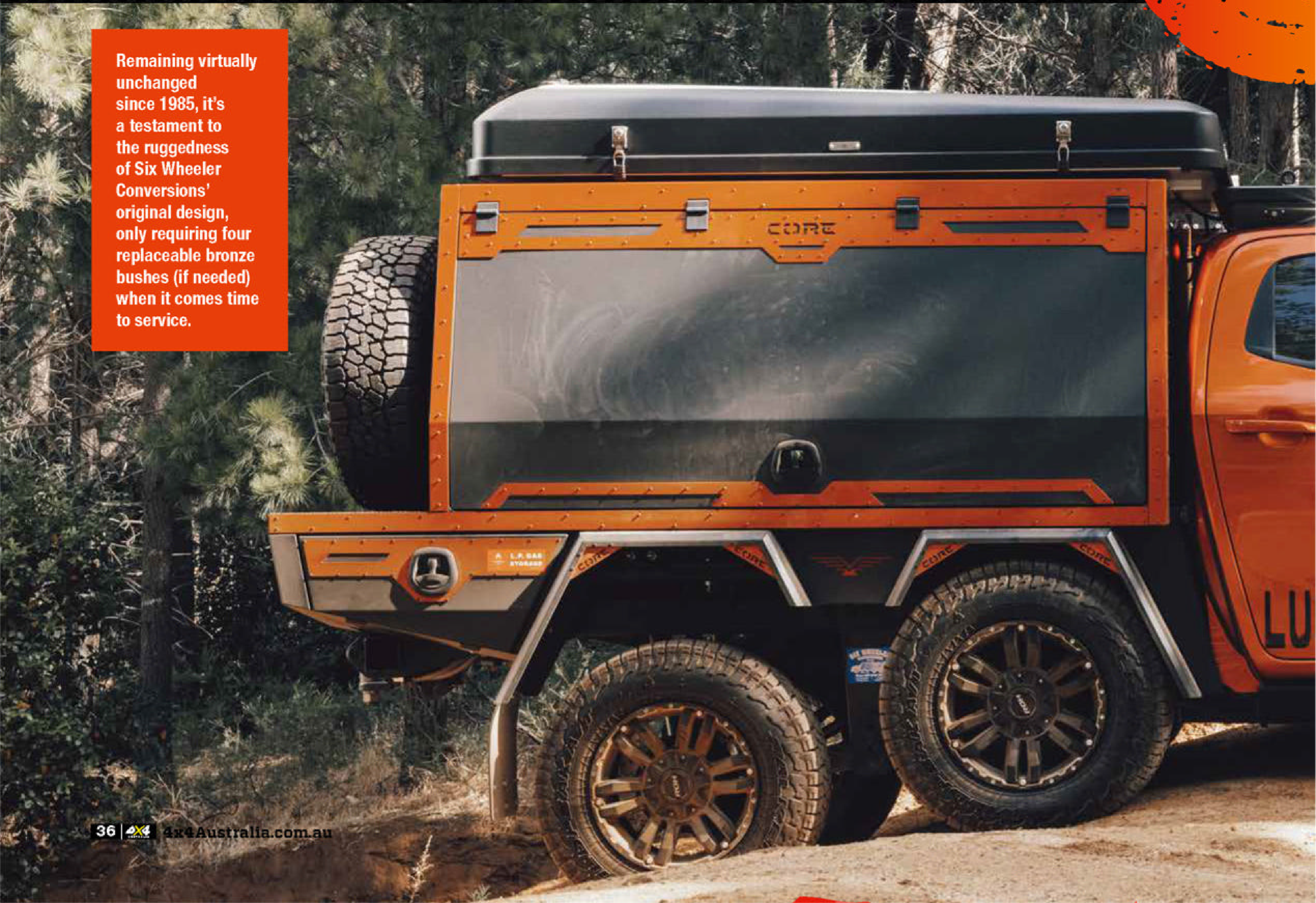
"Make a dozen coffees or so for fellow travellers, and maybe offset the cost of fuel as we travel.

"Since having our car on display at Perth 4WD & Adventure Show and Core Off-Road's grand opening of their new showroom, we have been asked to tag along with the Gibbsters in May, making coffee for all involved in the mornings and evenings.

"The Gibb Challenge is an annual charity bike ride from Derby to El Questro to raise money for the Royal Flying Doctor Service. When Simon Rimmer (event director) reached out to us, we jumped at the opportunity to be part of such a fantastic event for such a worthy cause. We are currently shortlisting a few charity organisations, one of which we will partner with and donate a percentage of our coffee sales and online merchandise full-time as we travel Australia," they said.



A fully loaded kitchen complete with a portable induction cooktop, stand-up fridge, sink, and one hell of a coffee machine.



Remaining virtually unchanged since 1985, it's a testament to the ruggedness of Six Wheeler Conversions' original design, only requiring four replaceable bronze bushes (if needed) when it comes time to service.

## RAIN DELAY

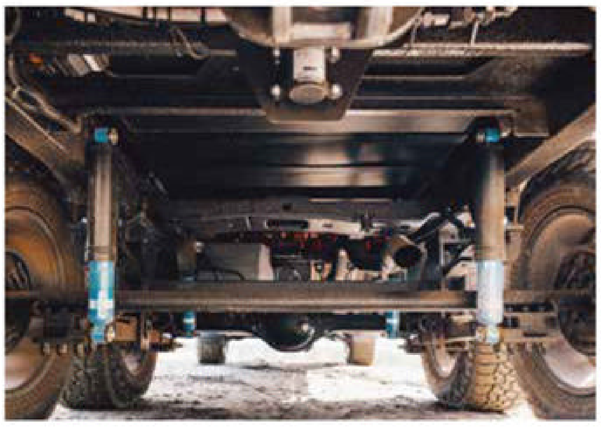
BEN and Julian at Six Wheeler Conversions (SWC) in Toowoomba, Queensland, soon had the new D-MAX on their hoist, with a third undriven axle mounted under the chassis. "(They were) so knowledgeable and helpful," the McDevitts told *4X4 Australia*. "The absolute foundation of this build! Absolute legends!"

Given a suspension lift isn't easily done once the conversion is welded in, Callum and Nicole chose to have it set-up with a two-inch lift, matched at the front by a Formula two-inch upgrade to keep things level. Adding an extra axle retains 60 per cent of the vehicle's rear weight over the rear drive axle, which is left in the OEM position. The additional lazy axle helping to support the weight of the extended canopy and extra tow-ball weight from the caravan soon heading its way.

While the guys were able to handle the conversion with little fuss, getting it certified stalled its completion considerably.

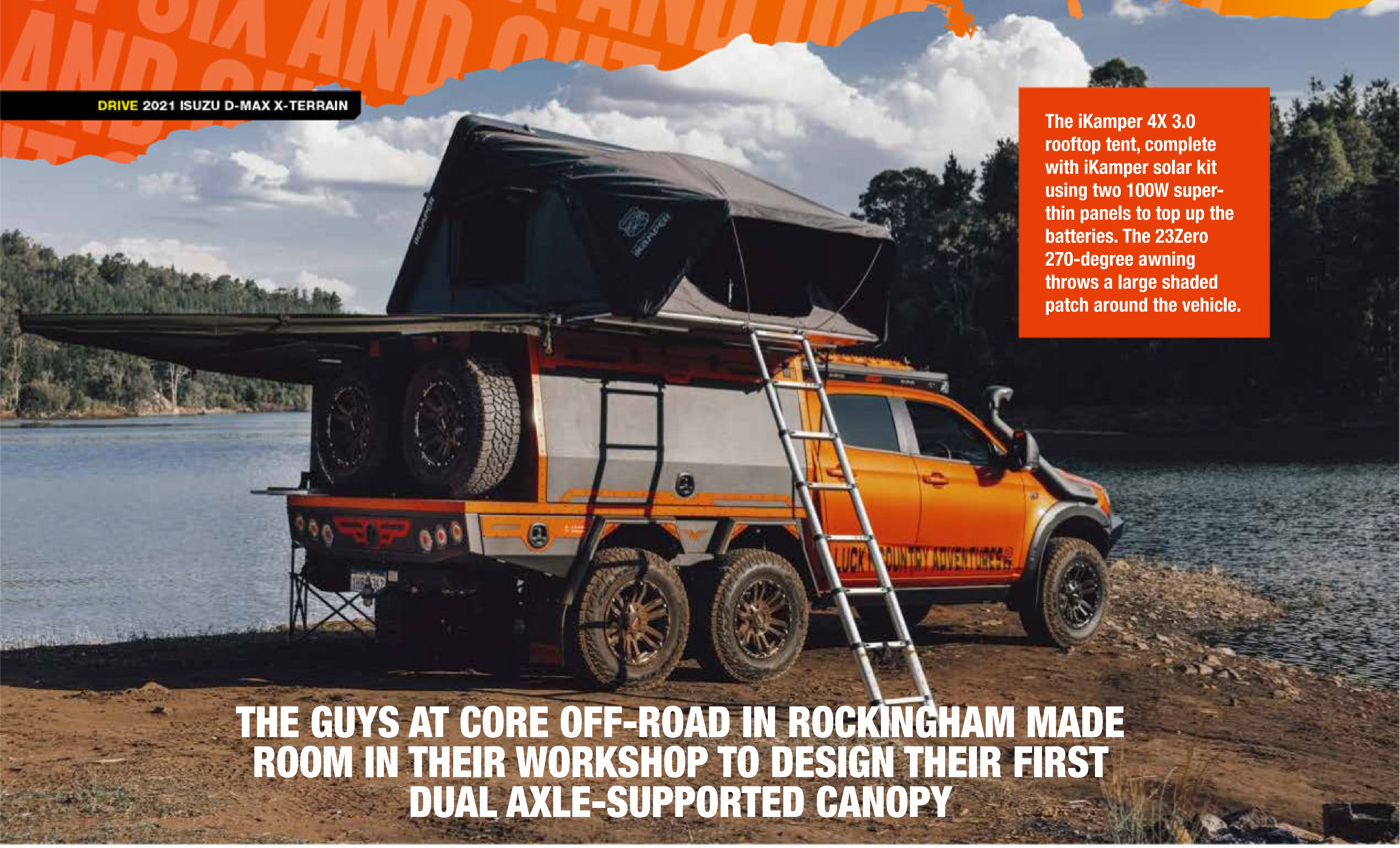
"Our car was one of the first new D-MAXes off the line to have a conversion done, and SWC were waiting for a new SSM licence for the conversions and Canberra were in lockdown, so we waited and waited," said the McDevitts.

With six-wheel braking also included, the GVM was raised to a sizeable 4630kg, with 4500kg towable. All up, a whopping GCM of 8130kg is able to be legally driven on Australian roads.



Ultra-tough Raptor liner was used to protect the entire underside from corrosion.

LUCKY COUNTRY ADVENTURES



The iKamper 4X 3.0 rooftop tent, complete with iKamper solar kit using two 100W super-thin panels to top up the batteries. The 23Zero 270-degree awning throws a large shaded patch around the vehicle.

THE GUYS AT CORE OFF-ROAD IN ROCKINGHAM MADE ROOM IN THEIR WORKSHOP TO DESIGN THEIR FIRST DUAL AXLE-SUPPORTED CANOPY

### BACK TO THE PAVILION

WITH the chassis now able to accommodate a much longer and heavier load, the newly converted D-MAX was turned over to the guys at CORE Off-Road in Rockingham, WA, who made room in their workshop to design their first dual-axle supported canopy.

"Without a doubt they turned our dream into a reality," Callum said. "A special mention also to Paul who was a massive help and looked after the majority of our build."

Given a clean slate but a list of needs and wants from Callum and Nicole, the design team fired up the computers and came up with a completely new design for their composite-based canopies. The Phoenix GT-U bears a list of features as long as your arm, but keeps everything easily accessible, as well as easily cleaned, while living life on the road.

Starting on the passenger side, there's a 110L Dometic upright fridge sandwiched between the front bulkhead and the electrical control panel, the latter being filled with custom labelled breakers for all on-board accessories. For outback tunes, there's a Fusion stereo controller with speakers up in the canopy doors. An Enerdrive ePro Plus auxiliary battery monitor and an ePower 2600W Inverter controller round out the panel, with an Enerdrive 200Ah lithium battery and their 40amp DC2DC battery charger tucked away out of site. A Topargee counter keeps an eye on the water drawn from two 80L tanks, with the rest of the panel filled to capacity with various switches for lighting, rear-mounted water pump and high-amp USB-3 ports.

Swinging around to the rear inner bulkhead of the canopy you'll find a huge slide-out pantry/kitchen, with drop-down shelves front and rear. The thickness of this assembly easily allows a Travel Buddy oven to be top-mounted and recessed, with a full-length slide-out cutlery drawer emerging from between the bottom rollers.

Both sides of the canopy are loaded with under-tray toolboxes, with a full-sized trundle drawer complete with gas-lifted 3mm top shelf out back. Directly above are the Core dual wheel holders either side of the top-mounted rear-vision camera, sending a picture to the clip-on display attached to the now redundant rear-view mirror.

Moving to the driver's side finds even more touring equipment and storage. While keeping the upper area relatively open for larger items, CORE designed two large lockable drawers to flank the lower edge and match the height of the Dometic CD30 fridge drawer ahead of them. More lighting switches are also available here, with a nine-metre retractable-reel air-hose located above, being fed by an ARB twin-pump compressor.

Hot water is provided by the Smarttek Lite gas hot-water system mounted on a swing-out bracket. Core fitted its fixed gas system, which includes the 2kg gas bottle bracket, inside the driver's side toolbox, before having the installation certified.

iKAMPER
CORE
1HRE·362
CORE
CORE

# PREMIUM BULL BAR PRICE REDUCTION

**A** NISSAN NAVARA **B** TOYOTA HILUX **C** MAZDA BT-50 **D** ISUZU D-MAX **E** ISUZU MU-X

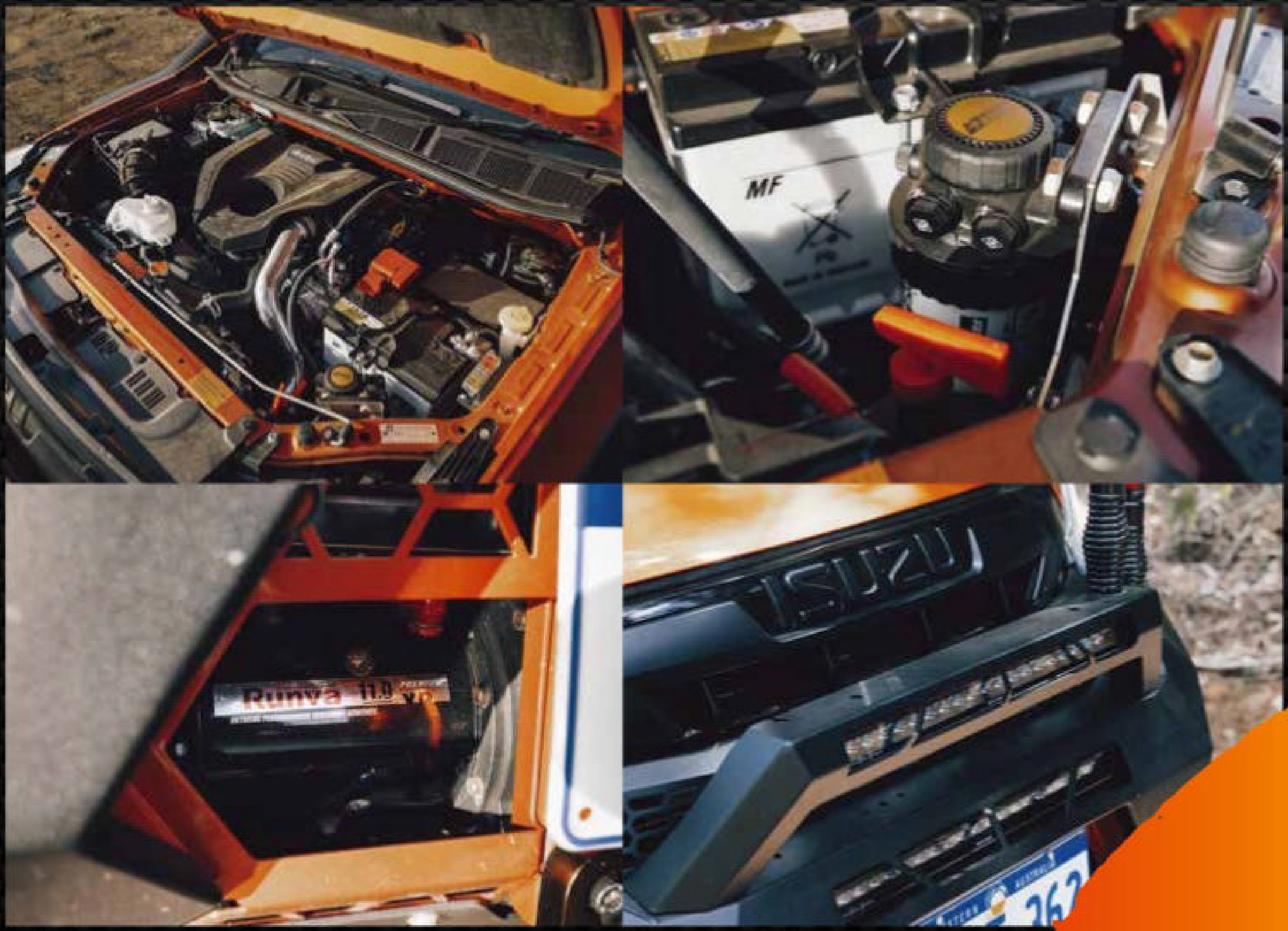
SAVE $500

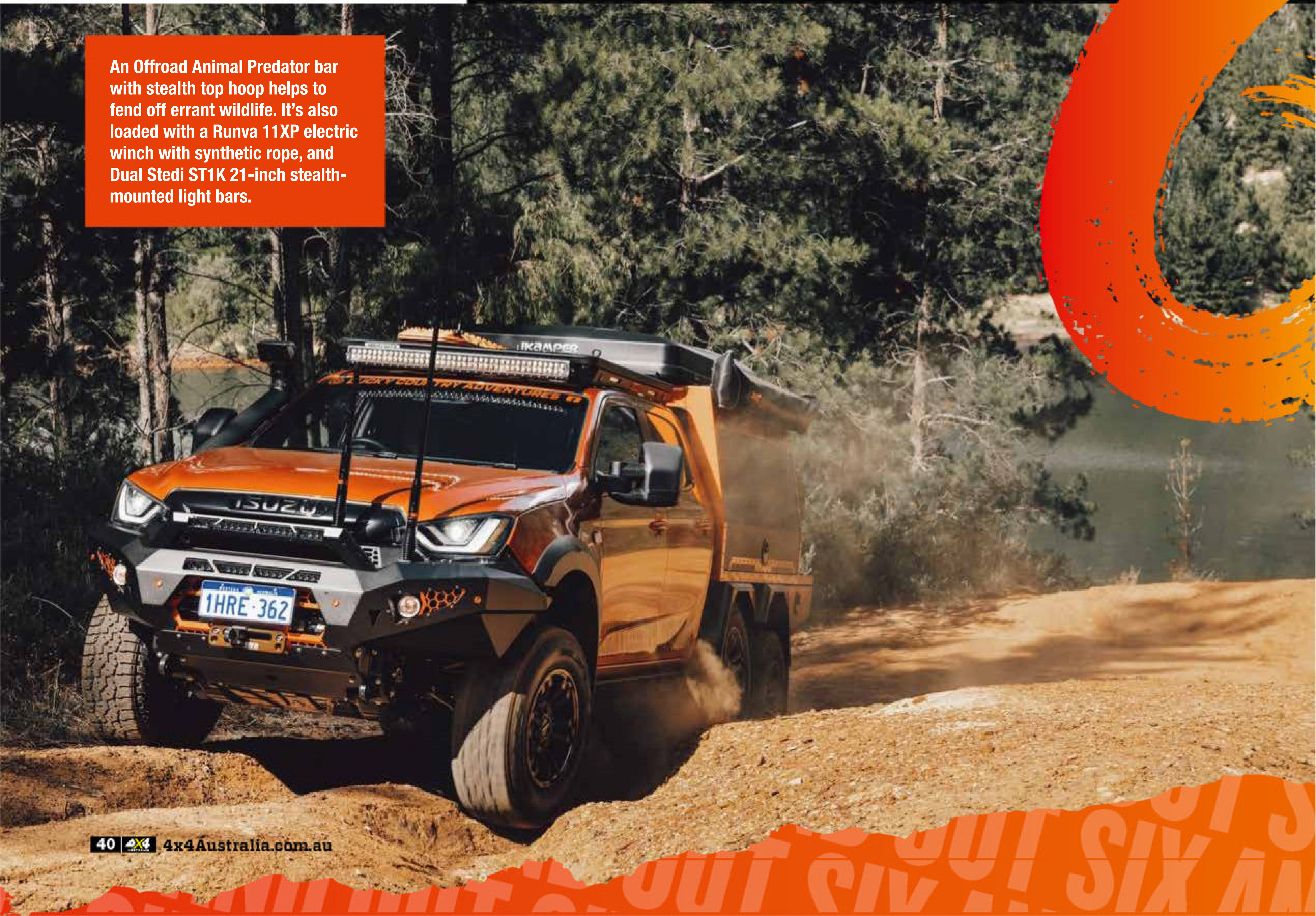
ONLY $1999

OL **CALL** 1800 624 444 **VISIT** OPPOSITELOCK.COM.AU

## CAUGHT BEHIND

GETTING the whole show on the road is the venerable Isuzu 4JJ3-TCX 3L. Undoubtably to the relief of any trailing uphill travellers, the McDevitts have chosen to upgrade the powertrain. Adding in a PWR front-mounted intercooler keeps intake temps down, while a Manta Performance three-inch exhaust funnels spent gasses away more efficiently. An MDP transmission valve body has the cogs shifting sweeter under load, while an HPD transmission cooler keeps its lifeblood from cooking. A Direction Plus Fuel Manager Pre-Filter was chosen to further filter the diesel of contaminants before +30 injectors shoot it into the cylinders. Lastly, Modified Diesel Performance in Port Kennedy installed the Alpha Tech Firestorm ECU which piggybacks off the OEM unit, before tuning the whole shebang to a safe 263hp, with a sizeable 652Nm of twist.





An Offroad Animal Predator bar with stealth top hoop helps to fend off errant wildlife. It's also loaded with a Runva 11XP electric winch with synthetic rope, and Dual Stedi ST1K 21-inch stealth-mounted light bars.

TOUGH DOG
4WD Suspension
. . . Making Tracks
Across the World
TAKE YOUR
SUSPENSION
TO THE NEXT LEVEL!
ERI·85Q

SUSPENSION KITS | UPPER CONTROL ARMS | AIR ASSIST | GVM UPGRADES

***WWW.TOUGHDOG.COM.AU***

VIDEO
1HR

FALCON 270

## FOLLOW ON

"THE build needed the perfect balance of capability, functionality and have that wow factor," says Callum. "I think we got pretty damn close. All the companies that had a part in this build have all combined to allow us to be able to live out our dream and hopefully inspire others to do the same.

"A couple of massive thank yous to Ben and Julian at SWC, Jimmy and Jodes at Core Off-Road, Perth Detailing Centre in Osbourne Park, Modified Diesel Performance, Toxic Tinting in Port Kennedy, and Fatal FX Panel & Paint in Rockingham."

Now that the build is complete Callum, Nicole and Mackenzie are on to their final shakedown runs before heading off proper, already documenting their adventures through all main social media platforms, using their @luckycountryadventures moniker. Check them out, and if you happen to be wherever they are, there's a good chance there'll be a great coffee and a chin-wag when you say hi.

While mum and dad get to relax, full-time explorer Mackenzie is living the life most kids only dream about.

SAFARI

SNORKEL

The Safari 4X4 *V-SPEC* Snorkel to suit Toyota LandCruiser 300 Series.

Available Now

SAFARI
SAFARI 4X4
SAFARI4X4.COM.AU
MELBOURNE - AUSTRALIA

TOYOTA
1UJ 6LE
VICTORIA - THE EDUCATION STATE

# THE DIFFERENCE

**WORDS** EVAN SPENCE **PHOTOS** OFFROAD IMAGES

## DOES A LUXURY FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE REALLY NEED THIS MUCH OFF-ROAD CAPABILITY? OR DOES A CAPABLE FOUR-WHEEL DRIVE NEED THIS MUCH LUXURY?

IF YOU want locking differentials, front and rear, in a new 300 Series LandCruiser, this GR Sport is the only model in the line-up to include them. There is no other option box to tick, if you want factory lockers in a 300 Series, it's either pony up the money for the second-most expensive model 300 Series, or pay a visit to your local four-wheel drive shop and have some aftermarket diff locks installed.

While modern traction-control systems are tremendously capable, especially the offerings from Toyota, sometimes there is no substitute for locking differentials for the ultimate in control when navigating technical terrain.

As well as having a centre, front and rear differential lock, the GR Sport LC300 also boasts E-KDSS – or Electronic Kinetic Dynamic Suspension System. This system allows for the vehicle's sway bars to be disconnected when off-road for more articulation and a smoother ride on choppy ground, then reconnect when on-road for better handling.

Clever stuff indeed, making the GR Sport the most capable 4x4 in the LC300 range. But you are also paying for the privilege. We spent a week living with the GR Sport LC300 to get to know it better, see if the hype is real, and find out just how far can you take them off-road.

**DUST-PROOF**
While I miss the 200 Series' split tailgate design, this single-piece tailgate didn't let in any dust.

THE INCLUSION OF FRONT AND REAR MANUALLY SELECTABLE ELECTRONIC

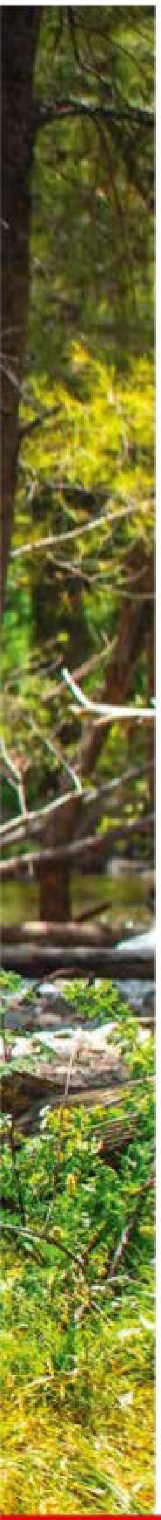
# HOW MUCH IS IT AND WHAT DO YOU GET?

THE LandCruiser 300 Series GR Sport has a listed driveaway price starting at $146,654. As tested with Graphite paint, the price increases to $147,364 not including any additional factory accessories. For your money, you get a five-seat full-size 4WD wagon (no seven-seat option for the GR Sport), with the widely discussed 3.3-litre V6 twin-turbo diesel motor bolted to a 10-speed automatic transmission, and a rather special interior that is functional while still feeling luxurious.

A main talking point of the GR Sport is the inclusion of front and rear manually selectable electronic diff locks, making it an extremely capable off-roader and the only vehicle in the 300 Series range to receive diff locks. To further enhance its off-road chops, the GR Sport boasts E-KDSS, which allows for the vehicle's sway bars to disconnect when driving on challenging terrain, thus allowing more suspension travel – they then engage when on-road, to provide solid cornering ability.

Multi Terrain Select is also included in the GR Sport's suite of off-road goodies, offering traction control calibrations to suit a wide range of terrain with the twist of a dial mounted on the dash. It's an effective system, offering high levels of off-road ability that both new players and seasoned four-wheel drive veterans alike will benefit from.

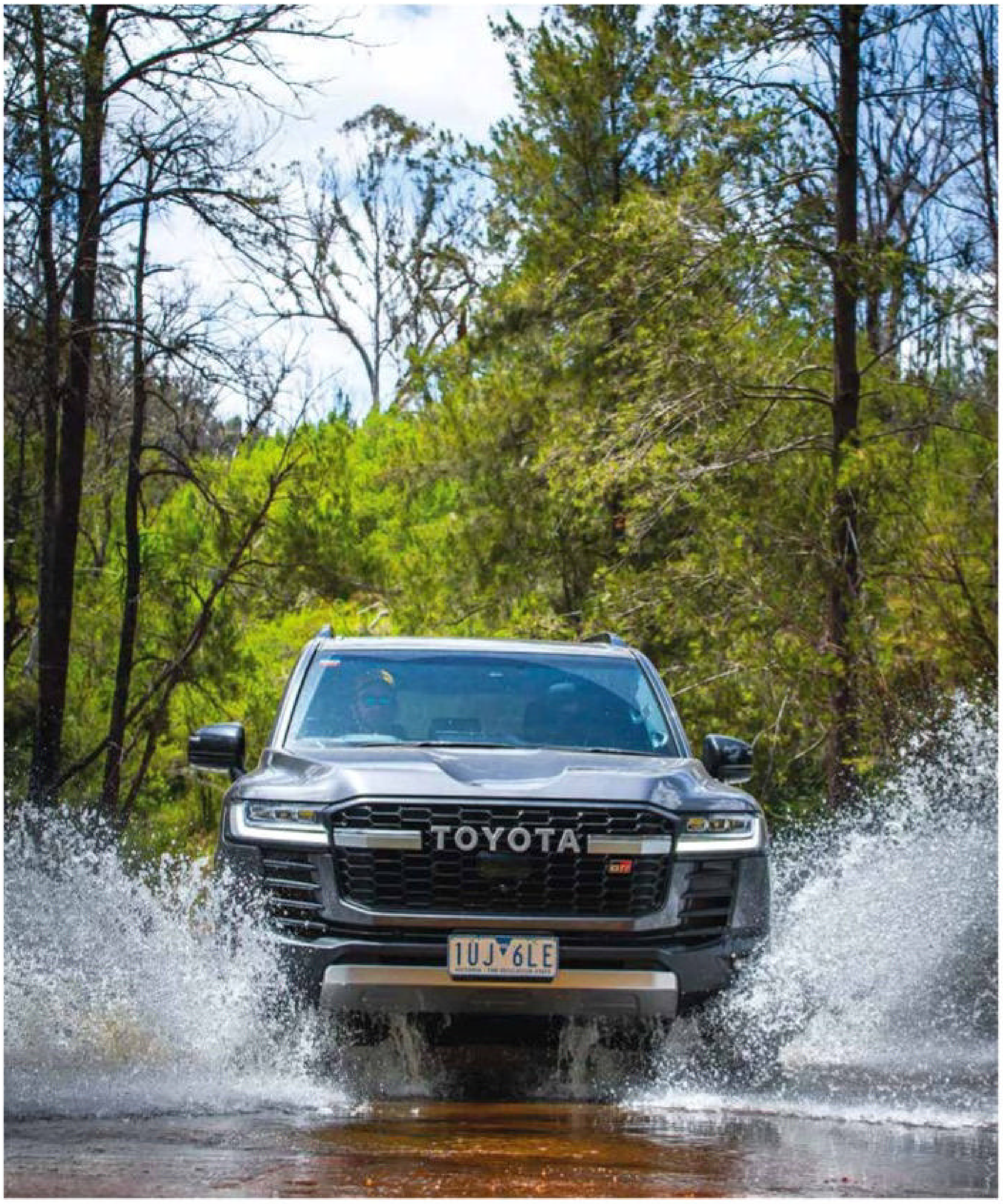
If all else fails, don't forget those front and rear diff locks that engage quickly and easily via push buttons mounted near the driver's left knee on the dash. This isn't the best position for these vital push buttons, and I'd prefer to see them placed near the gear selector.



## HOW DO RIVALS COMPARE ON VALUE?

THE main rival to the 300 Series is the Nissan Patrol. Pricing for the top-of-the-line Ti-L model comes in at $103,202, while the lower spec Ti comes in at $89,602 (both driveaway). This makes the GR Sport considerably more expensive compared to the Patrol, but the big Nissan wagon is starting to show its age.

Land Rover's Defender 130 is another option in this field, offering eight seats, solid off-road ability and a luxurious interior. Pricing starts at $124,150 before on-road costs, so there's still a fair chunk of change left over compared to the GR Sport.



## DIFF LOCKS MAKES THE GR SPORT AN EXTREMELY CAPABLE OFF-ROADER

**LOCKED UP**
With all lockers engaged, the GR Sport is a mountain goat when off-road.

**QUALITY RIDE**
Ride quality on fast dirt roads is exceptional, with plenty of grip on tight turns.

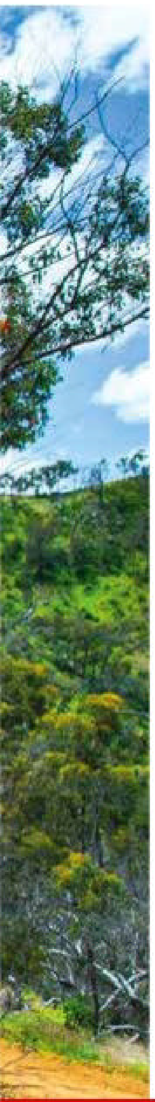
# INTERIOR COMFORT, SPACE AND STORAGE

THE vehicle's bespoke seats have been embroidered with GR Sport logos, and they're comfortable and supportive with plenty of adjustment. Second-row seating is comfortable and spacious, with my nearly-two-metre lanky frame having no space issues when seated in the back with the driver's seat set to my preferred position.

As expected from a large wagon, especially one with no third row, there's ample space for tourers and families (with no more than three kids), and it would be an easy affair to accessorise the large cargo area with aftermarket drawers to maximise available space.

The dash features a nine-inch infotainment system that is compatible with Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, and nine speakers throughout the cabin remain clear when pushed to their limit. A sporty vehicle needs a good sound system, and the GR Sport has that in spades.

One peeve with this model compared to the 200 Series is the single-piece tailgate, as the split tailgate in the 200 provided a handy space for preparing a meal or a spot to sit. After speaking with a mate who recently purchased a 300 Series, he explained that, while he also misses the split tailgate, he can see why they have made the change as the single-piece tailgate allows absolutely no dust in – he couldn't say the same about the 200 Series.



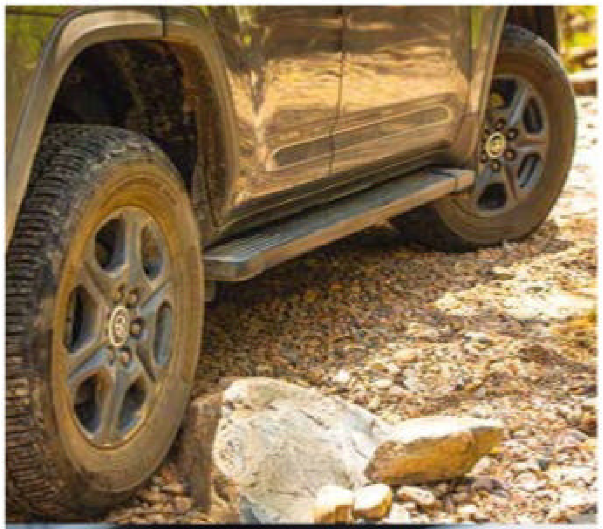
## WHAT IS IT LIKE TO DRIVE?

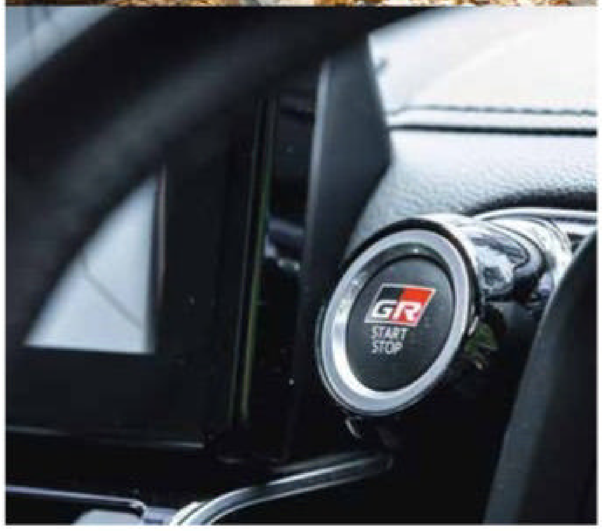
THE GR Sport is an easy vehicle to drive, no matter if that's bombing through the desert, towing on the highway or pushing through tough off-road obstacles. And while we didn't hitch up a 'van for this test, the GR Sport offers a 3500kg towing capacity. We have towed a large Kedron caravan with the LC300 platform before, and you can tell this vehicle has been designed with those who tow in mind as the brakes and suspension feel perfectly well-suited to this task, as does the performance of the engine and gearbox.

On road, there's nothing offensive about the way the GR Sport rides, handles and feels. Doing the speed limit of 110km/h the Cruiser sits on just 1500rpm, which offers a relaxed experience producing no noticeable wind noise – what you'd expect in a vehicle that costs close to $150,000.

Off-road, the GR Sport is right at home, especially on chopped-out dirt roads where the suspension compliance and levels of traction – combined with the plush comforts of the GR Sport's interior – mean you could cover serious ground without feeling fatigued at the end of the day.

With the transfer case shifted to low range 4x4, which is simple to operate and engages quickly (always a good sign), the GR Sport is a weapon. The traction system is effective, especially when you play with Multi Terrain Select modes. With the front and rear lockers engaged, the only thing that will stop it is a lack of ground clearance and a lack of grip and lateral stability offered from the stock highway-terrain rubber in greasy conditions. The GR Sport should come with more off-road-focused rubber, and it's something new owners will be quick to swap.





**HIGH FIVE**
The interior is roomy and luxurious, but only five seats are available in the GR Sport model.

## HOW IS IT ON FUEL?

WE recorded a final fuel-use figure of 11.15 litres per 100km, which is reasonable for such a large vehicle. This was tested over a variety of terrain including slow technical off-roading, highway cruising and urban commuting. To put this in comparison, a recent stint in the similarly sized 2022 Nissan Patrol saw fuel consumption figures reach 16 litres per 100km.

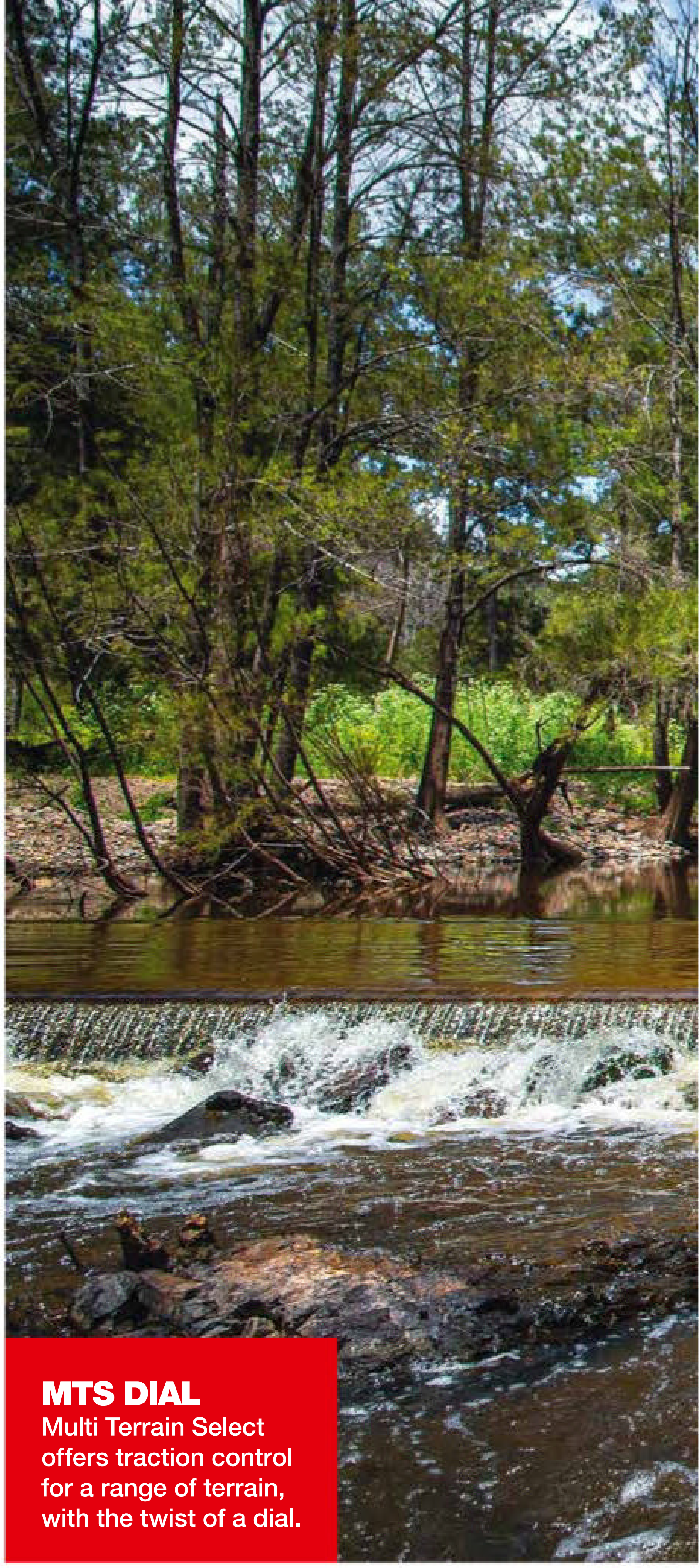
## HOW SAFE IS IT?

MOST of the range have been awarded a five-star ANCAP rating, with the official ANCAP website stating the LandCruiser received the second highest score to date for Vulnerable Road User Protection under its 2020-22 protocols, with a score of 81 and 89 per cent for occupant protection. We can't verify this for the GR Sport variant as it remains untested at this time and as such has no official safety rating.

# WARRANTY AND RUNNING COSTS

THE 300 Series is covered by a five-year, unlimited-kilometre warranty, with a conditional seven years offered on the engine and driveline. Service costs are capped across the range, coming in at $400 per service up to five years or 100,000km, whichever comes first. Service intervals are every six months or 10,000km, depending on what comes first.

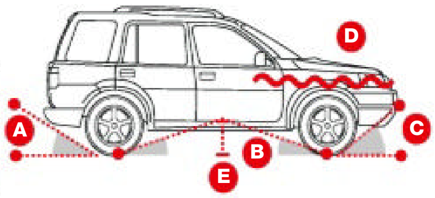
**TYRE CHOICES**
We'd love to see bigger and more aggressive rubber on the GR Sport, as the stock tyres let it down when off-road.



**MTS DIAL**
Multi Terrain Select offers traction control for a range of terrain, with the twist of a dial.

### 2022 TOYOTA LC300 GR SPORT

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **A** | DEPARTURE ANGLE | 25° |
| **B** | RAMPOVER ANGLE | 21° |
| **C** | APPROACH ANGLE | 32° |
| **D** | WADING DEPTH | 700mm |
| **E** | GROUND CLEARANCE | 235mm |



# VERDICT

IN some ways, the GR Sport doesn't make sense, and it's peculiar as to why one of the top-tier LC300s is the only offering to come with diff locks. It'd be great to see this as an option across the range, as a base-model GX with diff locks would make for a better value proposition as a touring 4WD.

In saying that, the GR Sport is a properly capable vehicle that just needs a mild suspension lift and bigger, more aggressive tyres to do impressive things off-road, which is exactly what I'd do if I had $150,000 burning a hole in my pocket and wanted a luxurious vehicle that offers stellar off-road ability. Sure, it is expensive, but you are getting a fair bit of kit for your money – and, make no mistake, this is a quality vehicle that will last the test of time in our harsh Australian conditions.

The lack of a seven-seat option could rule the vehicle out for larger families, but there are other options in the 300 Series LandCruiser range for those who need more pews.

The ride on subpar roads is impressive, offering enough compliance to soak up bumps while remaining planted on highway sections. With both lockers engaged, the only thing that will stop the GR Sport off-road is the stock tyres, which are just too small and not aggressive enough to offer enough grip in sloppy conditions. Thankfully, that's an easy fix.

Considering it only used 11.15L/100km on test, it's also pretty darn good on the dino juice for such a large wagon – just what you want in a capable 4WD that is built to tour our large sunburnt country in comfort.

| 2022 TOYOTA LC300 GR SPORT | |
|---|---|
| ENGINE | 3.3L twin-turbo V6 diesel |
| MAX POWER | 227kW at 4000rpm |
| MAX TORQUE | 700Nm at 1600 to 4000rpm |
| 4X4 SYSTEM | Full-time dual-range, locking centre, front and rear diffs |
| CONSTRUCTION | Ladder-frame chassis, body on frame |
| FRONT SUSPENSION | Double wishbone IFS w/ coils, E-KDSS and variable shocks |
| REAR SUSPENSION | Solid axle, coil springs, E-KDSS and variable shocks |
| TYRES | 265/65R18 |
| KERB WEIGHT | 2630kg |
| GVM | 3280kg |
| PAYLOAD | 650kg |
| FUEL TANK | 110L |
| ADR FUEL CLAIM | 8.9L/100km |
| ON-TEST FUEL USE | 11.15L/100km |
| PRICE | $147,364 (as tested) |

# SUBSCRIBE TO

4X4
AUSTRALIA

## and get full access to our digital magazine archive!

DIGITAL ACCESS INCLUDES:
Browse all issues of *4X4 Australia* dating back to 2015
**that's more than 6 years of**
***4X4 Australia* magazine**

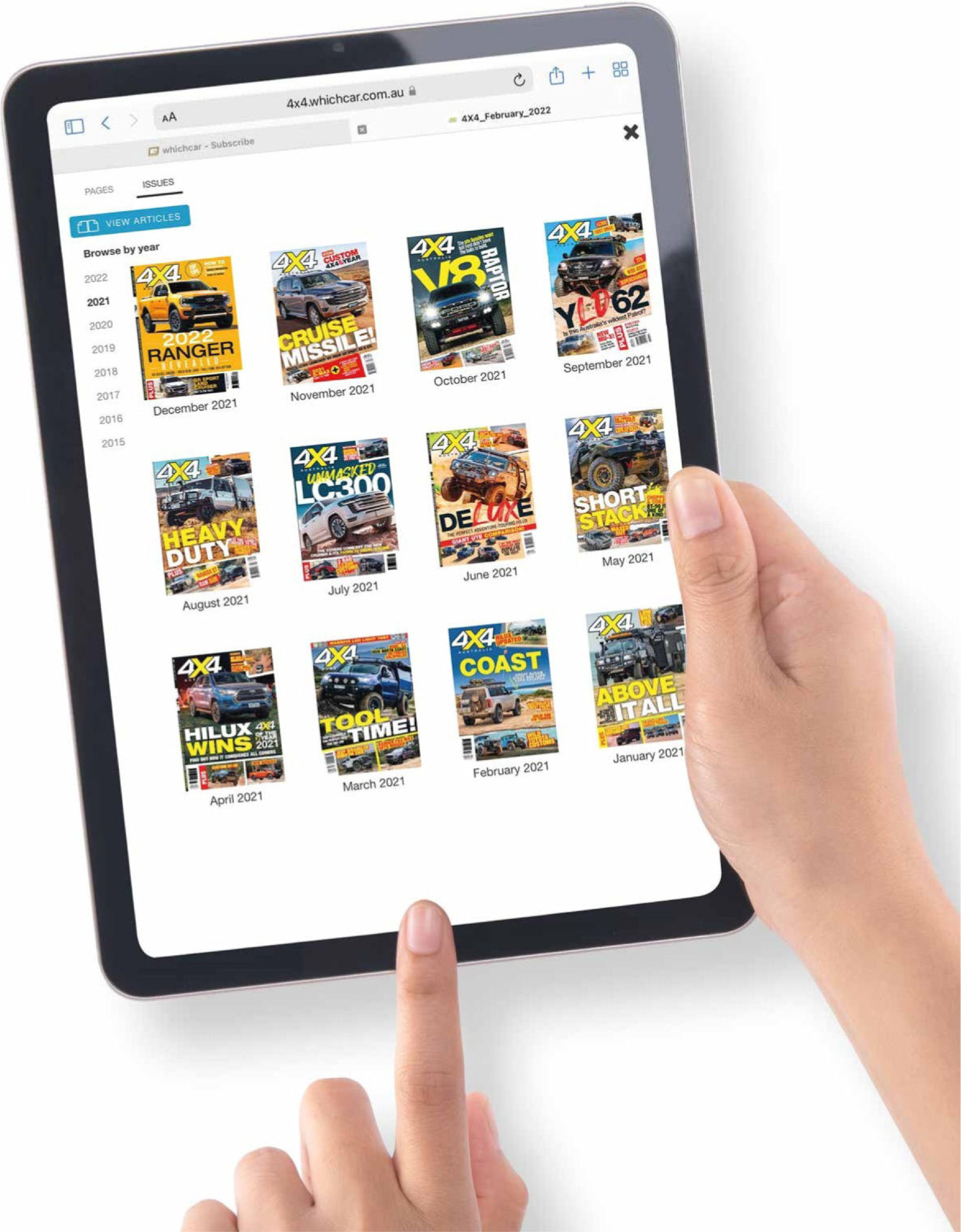
Early access to the latest issue before it goes on sale
Browse from any device

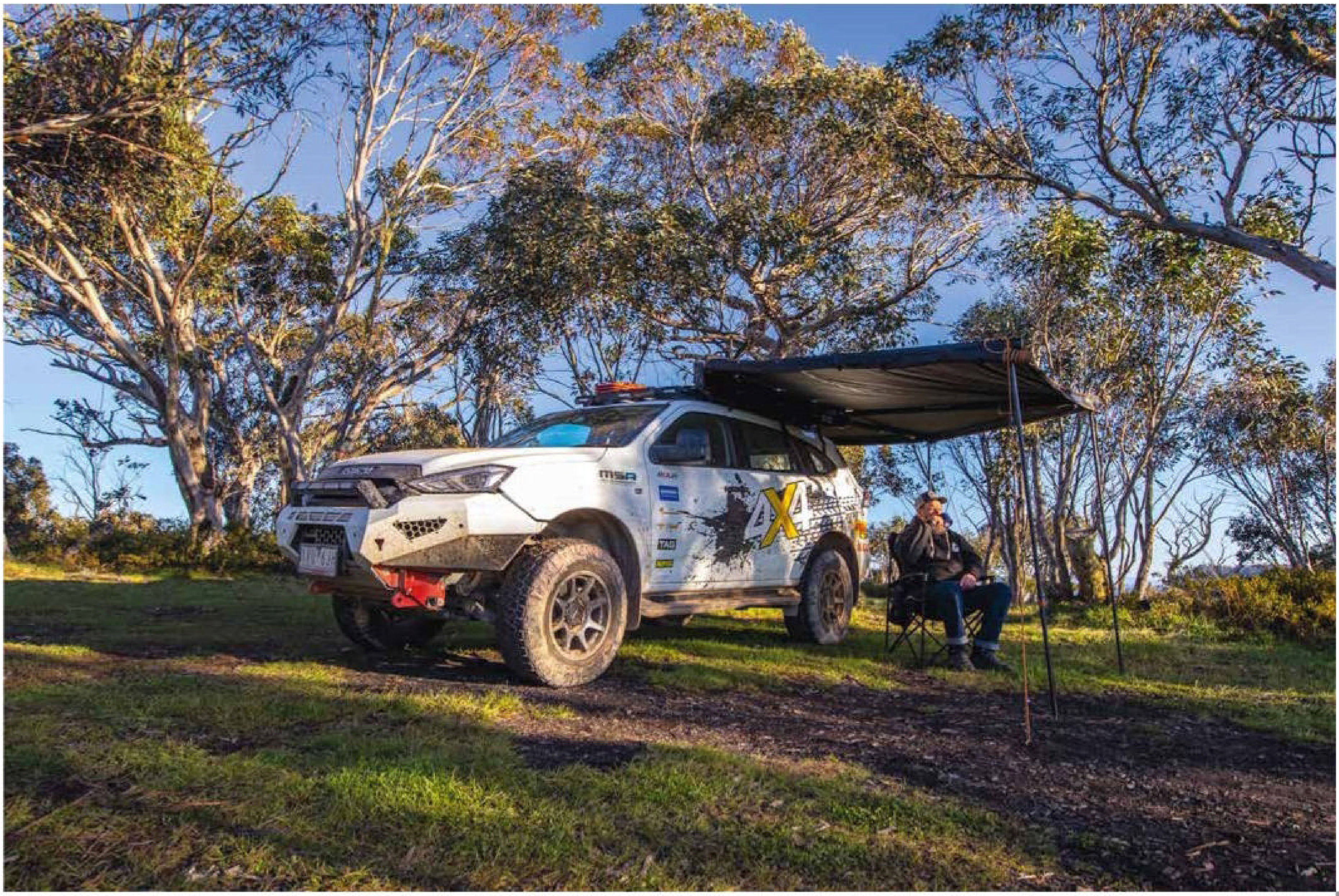
SELECT A PACKAGE:

3 ISSUES $29 SAVE 19% | 13 ISSUES $99 SAVE 36% | 26 ISSUES $179 SAVE 42%!

Scan the QR code or phone our
Australian-based call centre on
**(02) 8315 2092**
or visit shop.whichcar.com.au/4x4-australia

Offer valid until 31 March 2023. Prices shown are in AUD and available for Australian Delivery only. Discounts represent the percentage saving on the cover price. Digital only access available for $59 p/a. Offer valid for new subscriptions and renewals of existing subscriptions. If you have a current print subscription, you are entitled to free digital access. Please email subscriptions@wheelsmedia.com.au or phone our support team to request a login and password.


4x4.whichcar.com.au
AA
whichcar - Subscribe
4X4_February_2022
PAGES
ISSUES
VIEW ARTICLES
Browse by year
2022
2021
2020
2019
2018
2017
2016
2015
December 2021
November 2021
October 2021
September 2021
August 2021
July 2021
June 2021
May 2021
April 2021
March 2021
February 2021
January 2021
2022 RANGER REVEALED
CRUISE MISSILE!
V8 RAPTOR
YLD62
HEAVY DUTY
UNMASKED LC300
DELUXE
SHORT STACK
HILUX WINS
TOOL TIME!
COAST
ABOVE IT ALL



# UNDER COVER

## WE PUT THE OZTRAIL AWNING ON OUR MU-X TO THE TEST WITH A FEW CAMPING TRIPS OVER THE SUMMER MONTHS

**RATED**

**RRP: $1199.99**

**AVAILABLE FROM:** www.oztrail.com.au

**WE SAY:** Affordable and comprehensive awning that does what it says it should.

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS

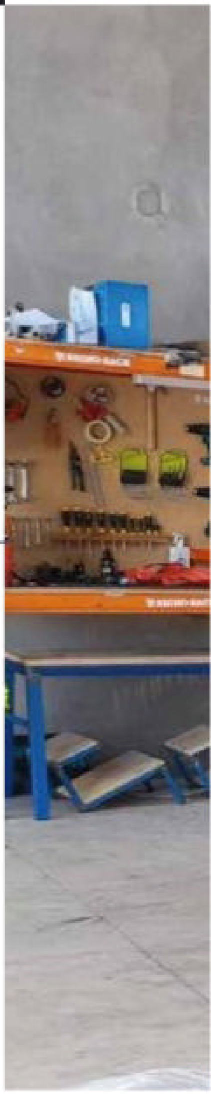
IF YOU'RE using your 4x4 vehicle for camping adventures, then a pull-out awning is one of the best pieces of kit you can add to it. Mounted to the roof rack or trailer, these awnings provide quick and easy shelter from the sun and rain no matter where you are. They can be a godsend when it comes to beating the conditions.

Vehicle-mounted awnings come in a range of designs and styles, ranging from simple ones that pull straight out from the side of the car, to 180° and 270° units that fan out around the vehicle to give the most amount of coverage.

For the Isuzu MU-X we fitted a 270° BlockOut awning from OZtrail for maximum coverage. The 270° part of the name indicates that the awning fans out to extend not only down the side of the Isuzu but around the back to cover the area under your tailgate.

The BlockOut part of the product name refers to the dark material used that is claimed to block out 95 per cent of light passing through the top of it and reduce temperatures under the awning by up to 10 per cent. Clever stuff.

The black material used is a 280gsm ripstop poly-cotton canvas that is seam-sealed and has a 1500mm waterhead rating, so it's pretty much waterproof – just as you want for camping on Australia's East Coast in the current climate.



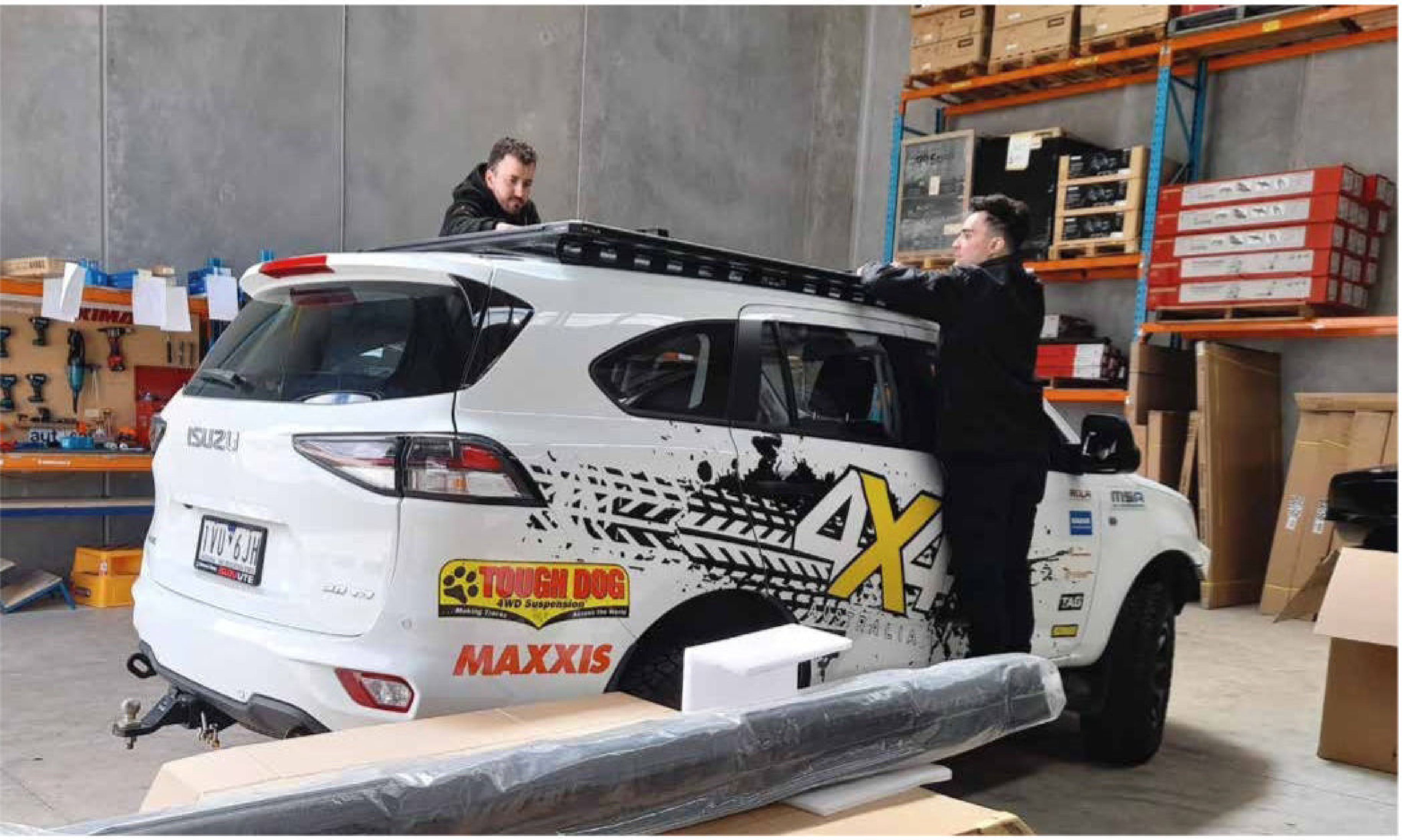
**FITTING**
Easy installtion for two people but can be fitted by one in a pinch.

The awning fans out on four aluminium C-channel arms, each with fold-down telescopic poles for strong support. One of the arms swings forward toward the front of the vehicle, while the last three pivot around the rear of the car to give the 270° and up to 20.96m² of coverage. Maximum coverage is achieved by unfurling the included wall sheet an extra 3.2m forward of the front support arm and propping it up with poles, or it can be pegged down to the ground to give protection from inclement weather.

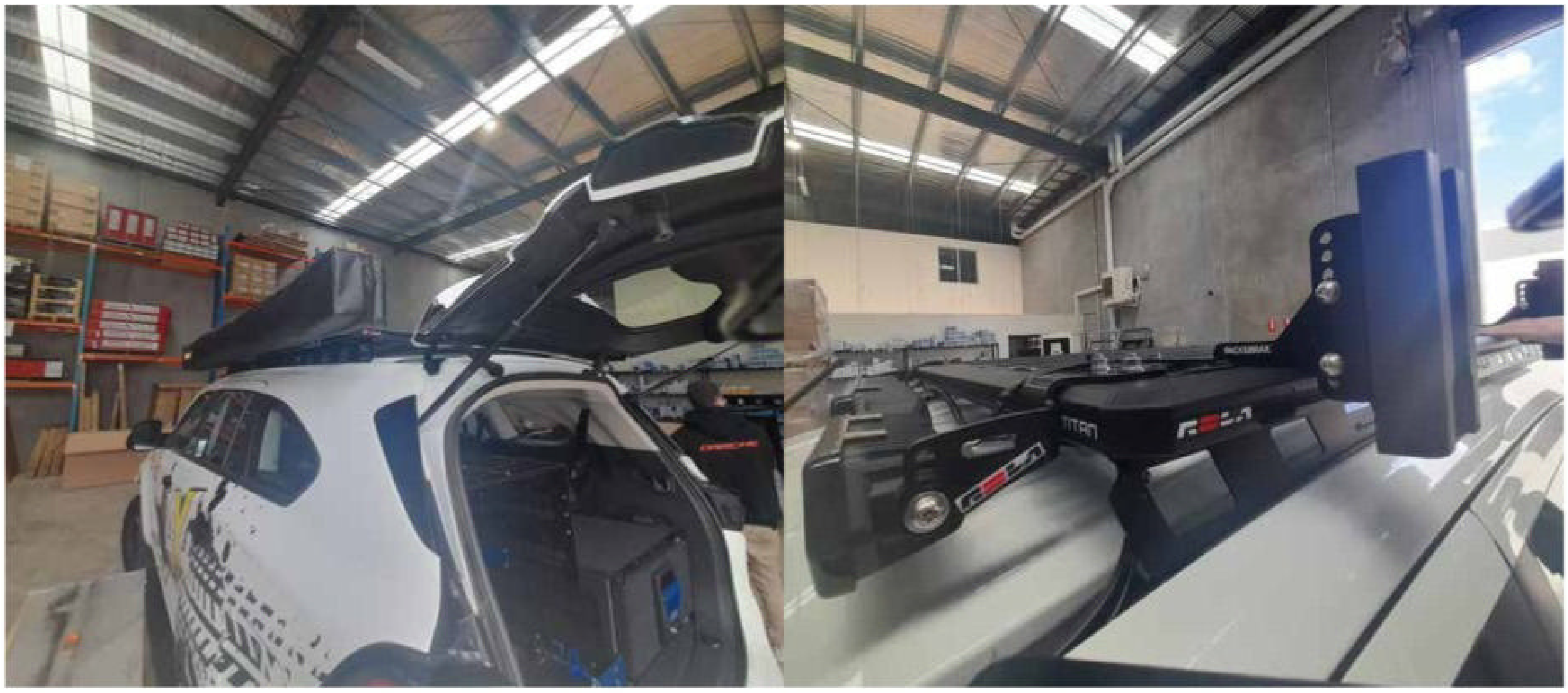
OZtrail also offers optional zip-on walls that fit to the outsides of the awning panels, to provide even better protection by creating a full enclosure.

The Blockout 270° awning includes all necessary poles, pegs and guy ropes to erect and secure the product for all conditions. It also includes brackets to mount the awning to most popular roof racks. We mounted ours to the Rola Titan Rack using quick-release brackets from RacksBrax, for fast and easy removal from the vehicle when it's not needed.

The awning and its poles pack up neatly in the heavy-duty PVC zip-up bag on the side of your vehicle.



**MEASURED**
Sized up by the team at Roof Rack Superstore, Epping.



**EASY INSTAL**
The Rola Titan Rack with quick-release brackets from RacksBrax for fast and easy removal.

## IN USE

I have to admit I was slightly daunted by the prospect of setting up the big Blockout 270° awning for the first time when I pulled up to solo camp in the Victorian High Country. I needn't have worried as it was pretty simple after unzipping the storage bag and unfurling it in to position, dropping the telescopic poles and then tying them all down.

I did have some trouble with the MU-X's rear door fouling on the awning arm when set-up and not being able to open the door to its fullest. I have since rectified this by loosening off the mounting brackets when the awning was packed away, and moving it forward on the roof rack around 50mm so that the rear door clears the awning when it is unfurled.

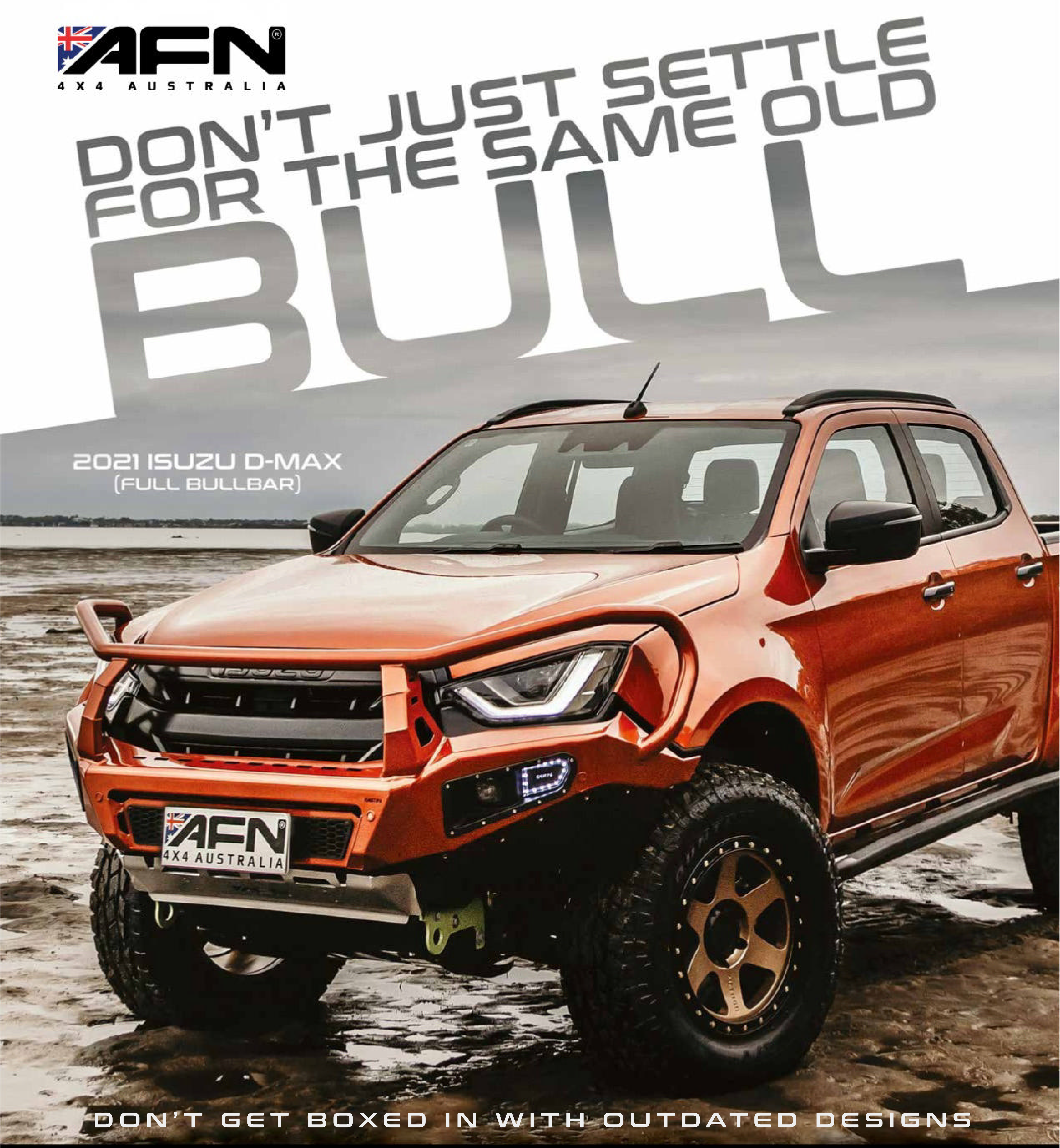
We reckon you could get away with unfurling it without tying it down for quick-stop shade on a still day, but it's essential to tie it down securely for longer and overnight stops and/or with any hint of wind present. All that canvas easily catches the wind and can easily cause damage if it does.

You need to tie down the awning not just to secure it against any wind but also to pull the material taught to prevent the pooling of any water in between the awning arms. If and when it does rain, you can then lower the poles at one end of the awning to allow any water to drain away where you would prefer it to and not pool up above.

I've only used the awning in light rain so far and there was no problem with pooling. On that occasion I unfurled the front wall and pegged it to the ground and put my swag under the front section to keep it dry, allowing it to be packed away dry the next morning. With the swag under cover, there was still enough room under the awning for a couple of us to sit in shelter.

Pack-up for the first time was again daunting but proved to be relatively easy and has become more so with repeated use. Once you unpeg it from the ground and fold the poles up to where they clip to the C-section arms, you simply close it up, folding the material around the arms, and it all tucks back in

**SLIM FIT**
The OZtrail Blockout 270° awning packs away neatly for life on the road.


AFN 4X4 AUSTRALIA
DON'T JUST SETTLE FOR THE SAME OLD BULL
2021 ISUZU D-MAX
(FULL BULLBAR)
AFN 4X4 AUSTRALIA
DON'T GET BOXED IN WITH OUTDATED DESIGNS

AFN® 4X4 AUSTRALIA

**1300 AFN 4x4 | www.afn4x4.com.au**

sales@afn4x4.com.au | 85 Kabi Circuit, Deception Bay, Qld 4508

facebook.com/AFN4x4australia

VISIT WWW.AFN4X4.COM.AU FOR A DEALER NEAR YOU

place where it is secured with heavy-duty Velcro straps. Try to keep the material spread across the arms rather than bunched up and it will be easier to do the zipper up on the storage pouch as this can get tricky. I would like to see a heavier duty zipper used here with a bigger pull-tag on it, to make it easier to close up.

All in all the OZtrail Blockout 270° awning has done what it says it will do in the brochure. It has provided us with cover from the sun and rain, and it's self-contained and relatively easy to unfurl and put away, even single-handed. Shorter users will want to have a step handy to make things easier, especially if their car has a high roof – but this isn't an issue for my 185cm height.

The Blockout 270° can be mounted on your vehicle rack, along with other accessories and even a rooftop tent if they are your thing. The awning weighs 27.17kg, so adding it with an RTT and the weight of the roof rack itself could be pushing your vehicle's roof capacity to its limits. We know it would certainly exceed the MU-X's 100kg rating. The other alternative is to mount the awning on your camper trailer, which would allow you to drive your car away while leaving your camp set up.

At $1199.99 the Blockout 270° is at the more affordable end of awnings of this design, so you could potentially buy one for both your 4x4 and your trailer for the same price as one of the more expensive examples.

**IT'S SELF-CONTAINED AND RELATIVELY EASY TO UNFURL AND PUT AWAY, EVEN SINGLE-HANDED**

**piranha**
**OFF ROAD PRODUCTS**

# NEW PRODUCTS FROM PIRANHA!

www.piranhaoffroad.com.au

**DRIVING LIGHTS & RECOVERY GEAR**

Piranha's new driving lights are built tough with die-cast aluminium housings, OSRAM chips, excellent reflector design, high impact sleek rimless design polycarbonate lenses with black powder coated stainless steel mounting brackets and bolts included, for that stealth look.

Complement your off-road adventure and never get stuck by equipping your 4x4 vehicle with Piranha's new Recovery Gear. Manufactured and designed to the highest quality, our Recovery Kit will make sure you have everything you need for any situation. With 7 fitting locations around Australia and our online store open 24/7 we're here to help you get to those hard to reach places.

**BATTERY TRAYS**
Over 150 different models available

**DUAL BATTERY MANAGEMENT**
DBE140SF Smart Isolator &
DBDC1230s DC-DC Charger with Solar Input

**SNOW & MUD CHAINS**

**SUSPENSION PRODUCTS**
Heavy Duty Upgrades & lift Kits

**PREMIUM ALUMINIUM UTE TRAYS , STEEL UTE TRAYS, AND FIBREGLASS CANOPIES**

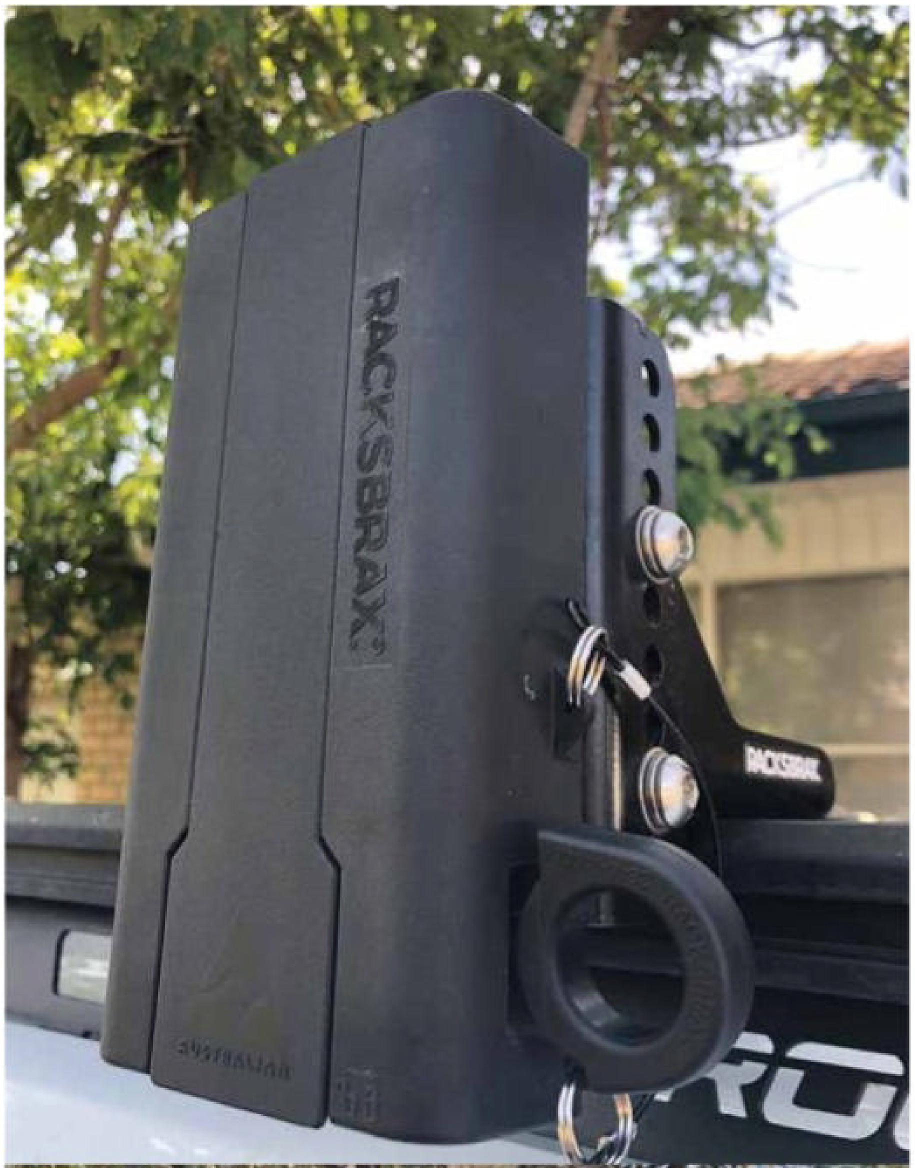
**SCAN TO VIEW MORE PRODUCTS**

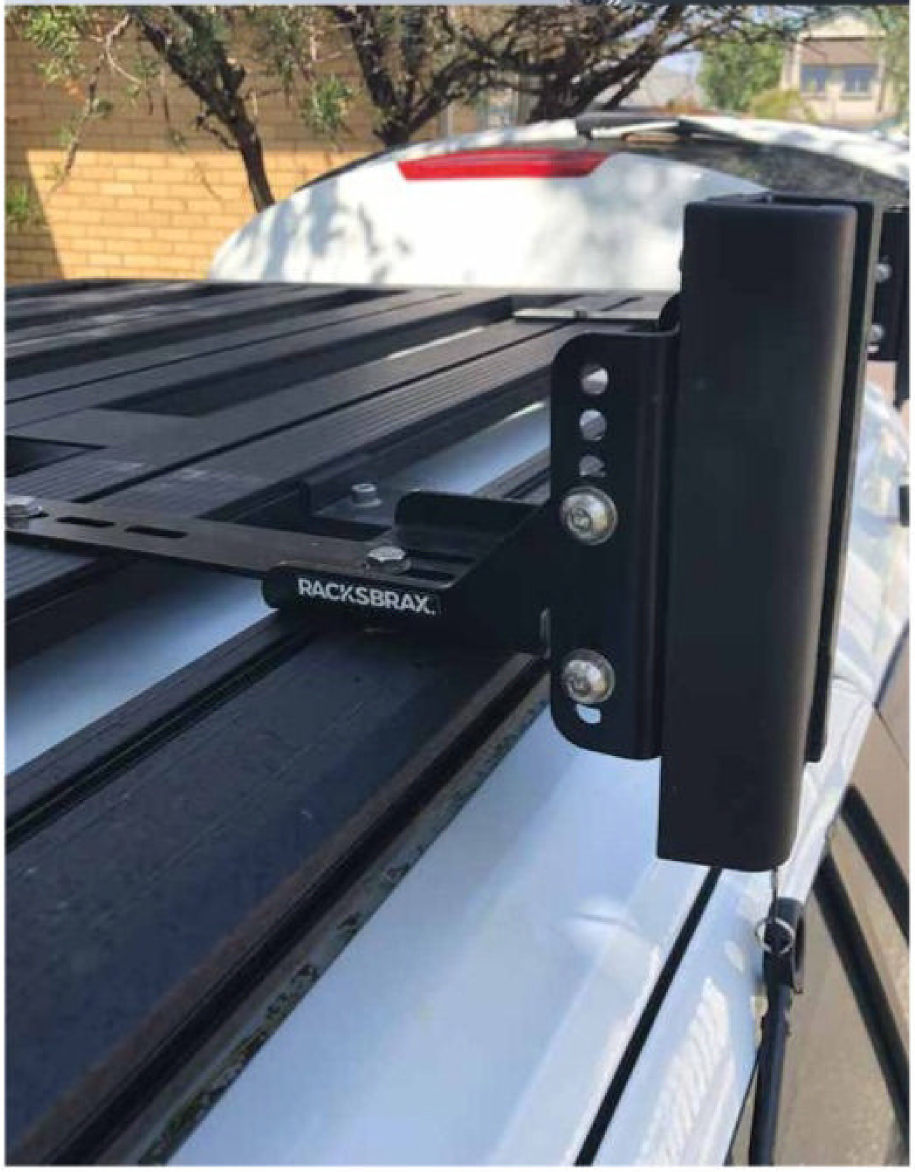
APLED · piranha OFF ROAD PRODUCTS · BLUE MAX

ENGEL A LEGEND IN RELIABILITY · MYCOOLMAN · Enerdrive · MSA · SAFARI SNORKEL · GME · Runva · RAM MOUNTS

**www.piranhaoffroad.com.au**

4/ 383 Dorset Road, Bayswater, VIC 3155 • (03) 9762 1200 /piranhaoffroadproducts PiranhaOffroad





WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS

4X4 AUSTRALIA AUSTRALIAN MADE PRODUCTS

# QUICK AFFIX

## AUSSIE-MADE QUICK-RELEASE BRACKETS FOR AWNINGS AND OTHER ROOF-MOUNTED ACCESSORIES MAKES FITTING AND REMOVING EASIER

**RATED**

**RRP:**

XD triple pack **$285**

XD long foot brackets (triple) **$430**

**AVAILABLE FROM:** www.racksbrax.com

**WE SAY:** Great Aussie-made products that make fitting and removing roof accessories simple.

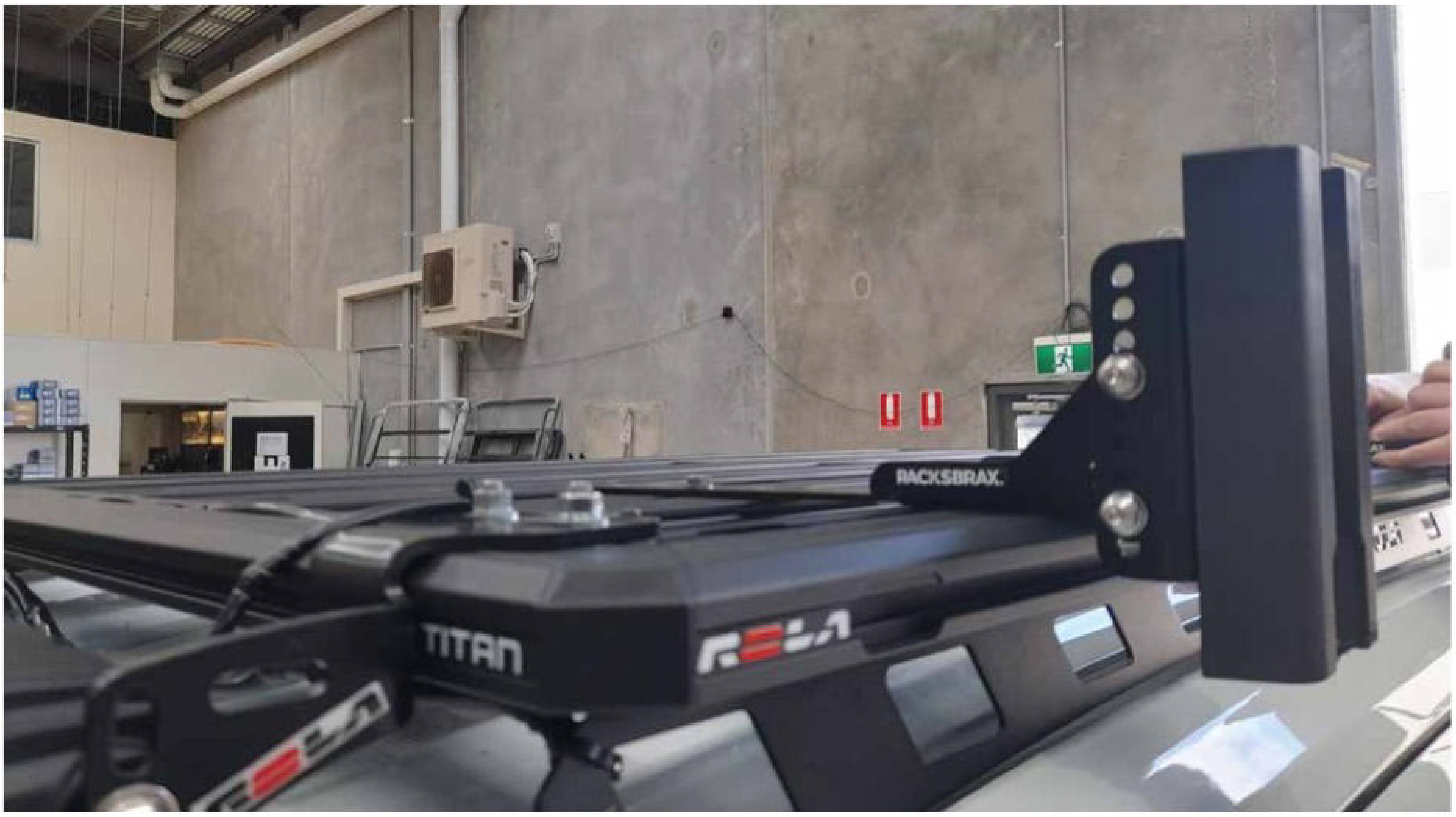
A VEHICLE-mounted awning is an awesome bit of kit to have on your 4x4, but for some users they may not be something they want to keep fitted to the car full-time. If you’re only using your car for one camping trip a year, it might be worth removing the accessories from the roof rack to reduce fuel consumption and preserve them from UV damage or thieving hands.

Unbolting an awning is not a difficult job, but it’s a task made even easier with these quick-release mounting brackets from Aussie manufacturer RacksBrax.

RacksBrax has developed a range of hitches to make mounting items like awnings, traction boards or fishing rod holders quick and easy, and by adding extra parts you can make swapping these rack-mounted accessories quick and easy. Add another set of the mounts to your garage wall and you then have somewhere to store your gear when it’s not on the car.

RacksBrax come in HD and XD models to suit the different weights of selected accessories. For the Blockout 270° awning on the Rola Titan Tray on our MU-X, we went with a triple pack of the XD mounts that sells for $285 from the RacksBrax website. The site also has a handy guide to help you select the right hitches to suit your accessories.

The RacksBrax basically have two parts: one that attaches to your awning (or other accessory) and the other to your roof rack. The two parts then come together to give a secure and lockable connection to fit the accessory to your car. They are adjustable for height and can be spaced along the



**EASY SYSTEM**
The system utilises separate brackets for the tray and awning.

## UNBOLTING AN AWNING IS NOT A DIFFICULT JOB, BUT IT'S A TASK MADE EVEN EASIER WITH THESE QUICK-RELEASE MOUNTING BRACKETS FROM RACKSBRAX

length of the awning to suit your roof rack.

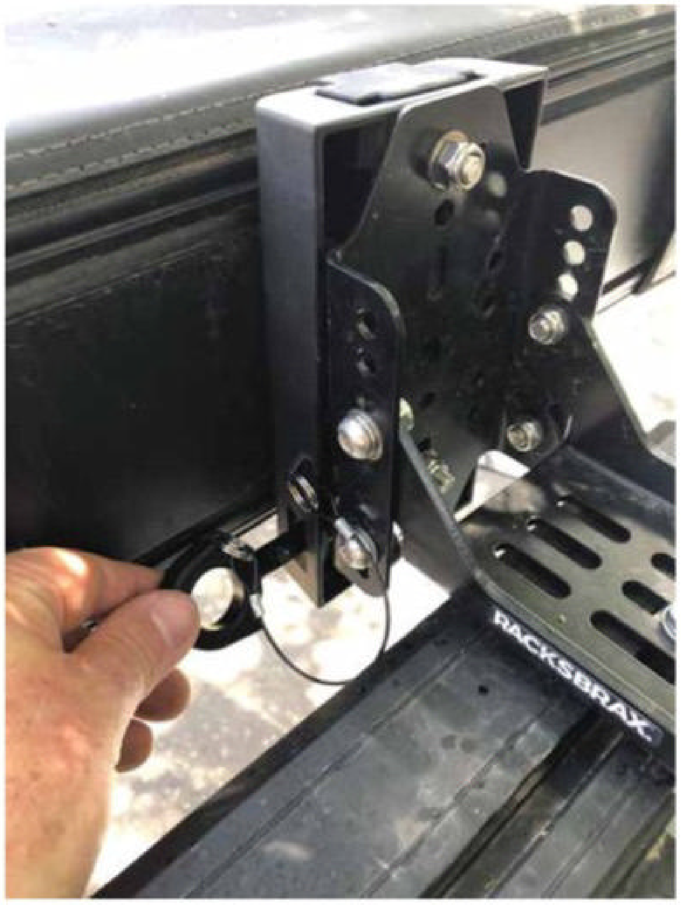
For our set-up we used the optional long foot brackets for the section that bolts to the roof rack. These extend across the rack to fasten on two of the rack's mounting slats and spread the load of the weight. Each of the brackets is rated to carry 20kg, while the OZtrail 270 weighs 27.1kg. A pair of MaxTrax Xtremes, like the ones we carry elsewhere on the roof rack, weigh 9kg and could also be carried on the RacksBrax hitch using a suitable mount.

To remove the awning you simply unlock the mount using a key, pull the pins from the mounts, in our case all three of them, and lift the awning off the vehicle to put it away for storage. RacksBrax also has neat covers that fit into the brackets to tidy the look up when there's nothing attached to them.

I can unlock, disconnect, remove and refit the awning off the MU-X myself using the RacksBrax and there's no messing about trying to hold it in place to line bolts up. I am 185cm tall, and it would probably be easier and safer with two people and a step for shorter folks.

As mentioned, the hitches are lockable with included keylocks. These lock the hitch pins to the mount so that your accessory can't be removed.

The RacksBrax hitches are manufactured solidly and look and feel to be durable. They are made with 'glass-reinforced nylon that is UV-stabilised to protect the products against the harsh Aussie sun while up on the roof of your 4x4. Best of all, they are made in Australia!



**LOCK TIGHT**
A hitch pin holds the mount in place and it can be locked in for security.

TJM
TAKE THE
INSTORE
GET EQUIPPED FOR ANYTHING
BXK·190

4X4 AUSTRALIA · BUILT

# PROTECTION RACKET

## OUR RANGER BUILD KICKS OFF WITH THE INSTALLATION OF TJM BAR-WORK AND WINCH

**WORDS** MATT RAUDONIKIS

AS REVEALED in our January issue, our new vehicle build for 2023 is a Ranger Sport V6. As one of the most talked about and biggest new 4x4 vehicle launches of 2022, the new Ranger holds heaps of appeal to both us and the aftermarket suppliers, so it was an easy choice of vehicle for our build. Much easier than actually buying one at the moment!

It's around six months since the RA Ranger hit the market and there's plenty of great aftermarket gear available for it, so we were able to jump right in to the build. First stop was to the workshop of TJM Epping in Victoria. The Epping store is relatively new and is a corporate showcase store, so it's all shiny and clean and loaded with all the best TJM gear as well as plenty from other leading 4x4 accessory brands.

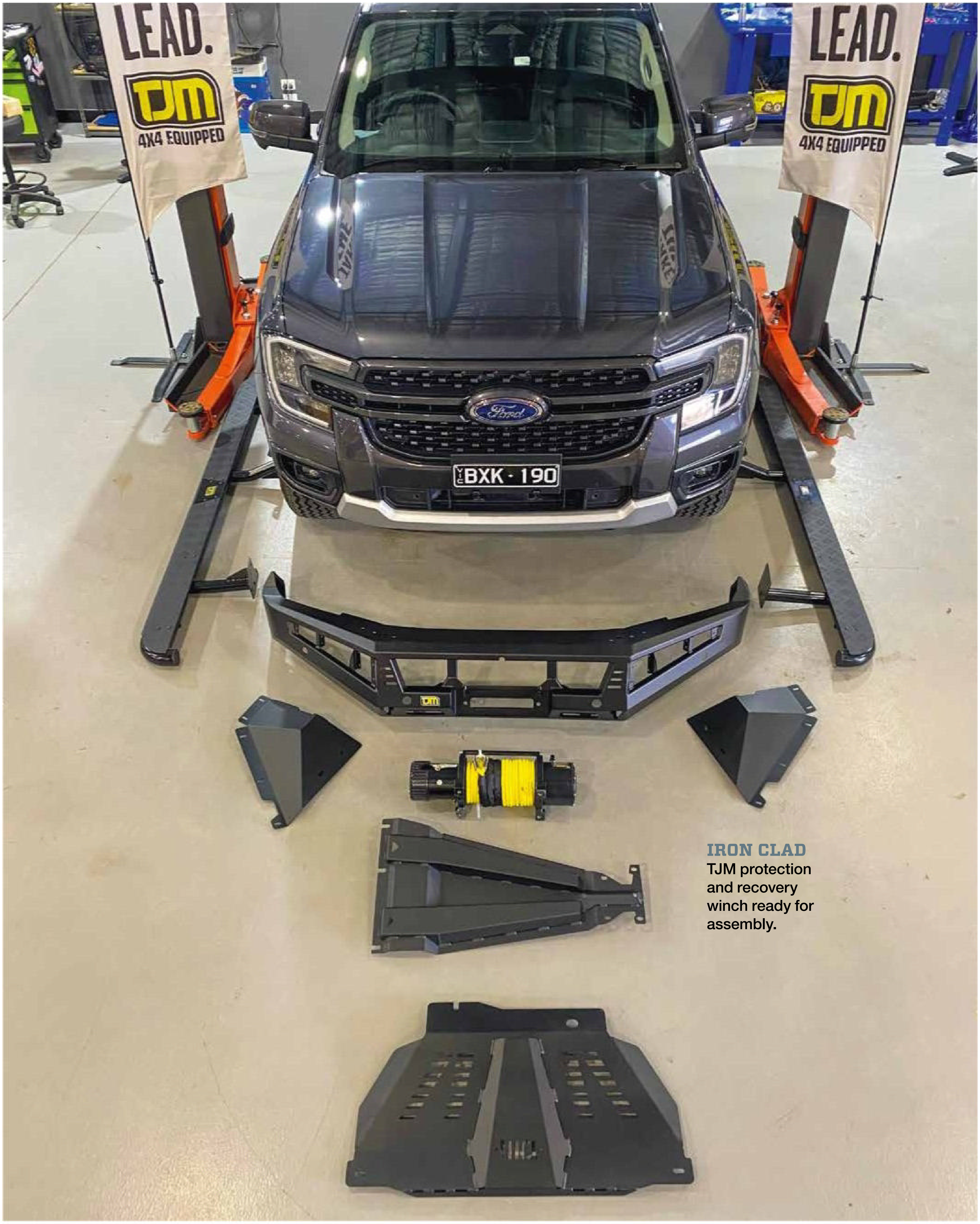
TJM supplied the protection equipment and a winch for the Ranger and, while we were keen to fit a full bullbar – like TJM's Outback Bar – and side rails to this build, the company was keen to show off its new Venturer Bar. Now that the Venturer bar is on the car, we're glad they insisted on it.

Why fit a replacement bumper that doesn't offer the full protection of a bullbar with hoops? Hoopless bars like the TJM Venturer still offer increased protection over the factory plastic bumper because they are made from steel. The design of the Venturer bar not only looks good and offers a level of protection over that of the factory plastic bar, it also improves your car's off-road ability by increasing the approach angle and the tapered 'wings' of the bar, giving more clearance for your front tyres.

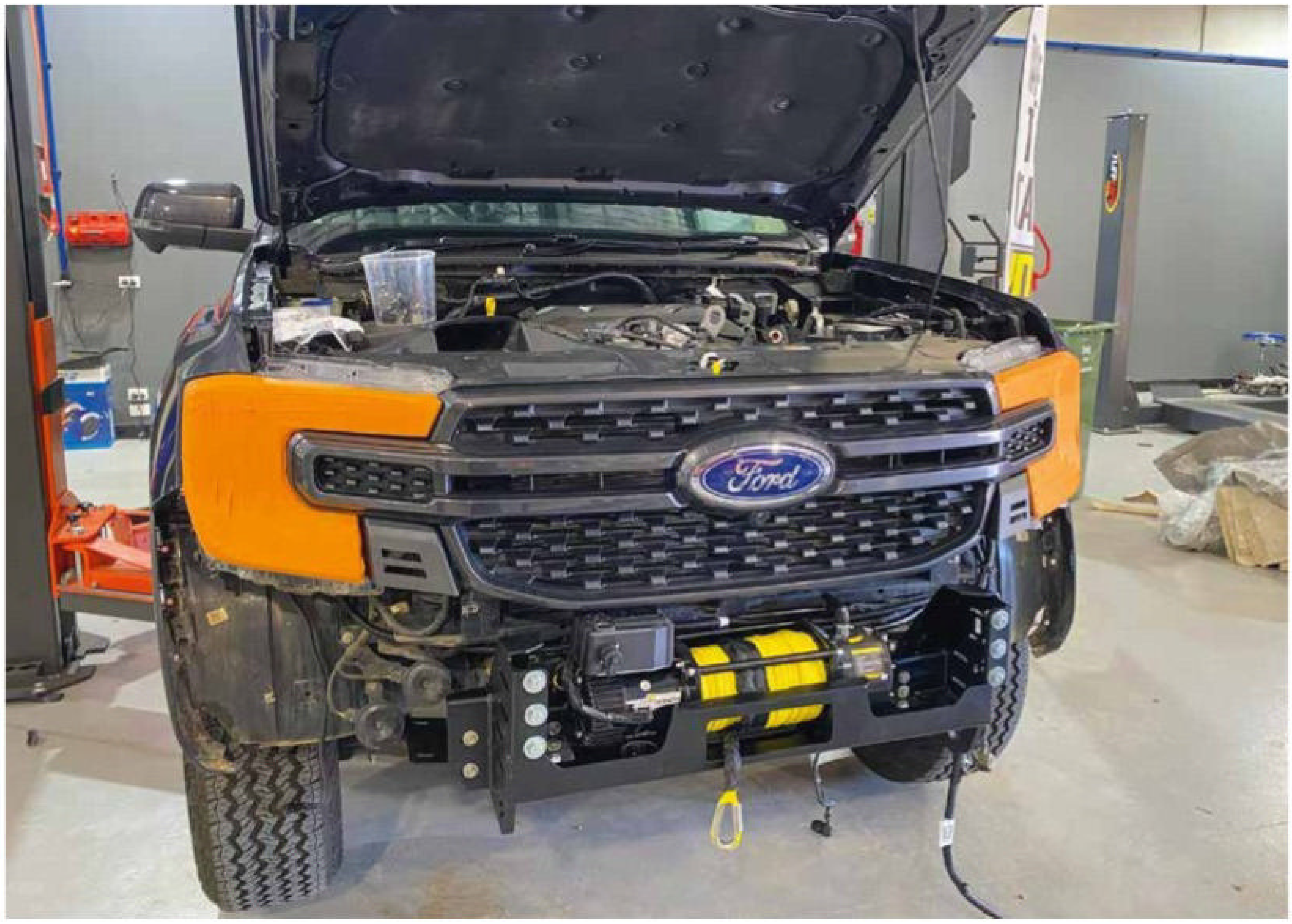
The Venturer bar also comes with integrated 8000kg rated recovery points, high-lift jacking points, provisions for a winch mount, and multiple options for mounting driving lights and aerials.

The bar is designed and tested to meet all ADR regulations and maintain the operation of the airbags and radar controlled safety features. The factory

TJM SUPPLIED THE PROTECTION EQUIPMENT AND A WINCH FOR THE RANGER, THE COMPANY KEEN TO SHOW OFF ITS NEW VENTURER BAR


LEAD.
TJM
4X4 EQUIPPED
LEAD.
TJM
4X4 EQUIPPED
BXK · 190

**IRON CLAD** TJM protection and recovery winch ready for assembly.



**WINCH**
TJM Epping fitting the mighty Torq 9500lb winch to our Ranger.

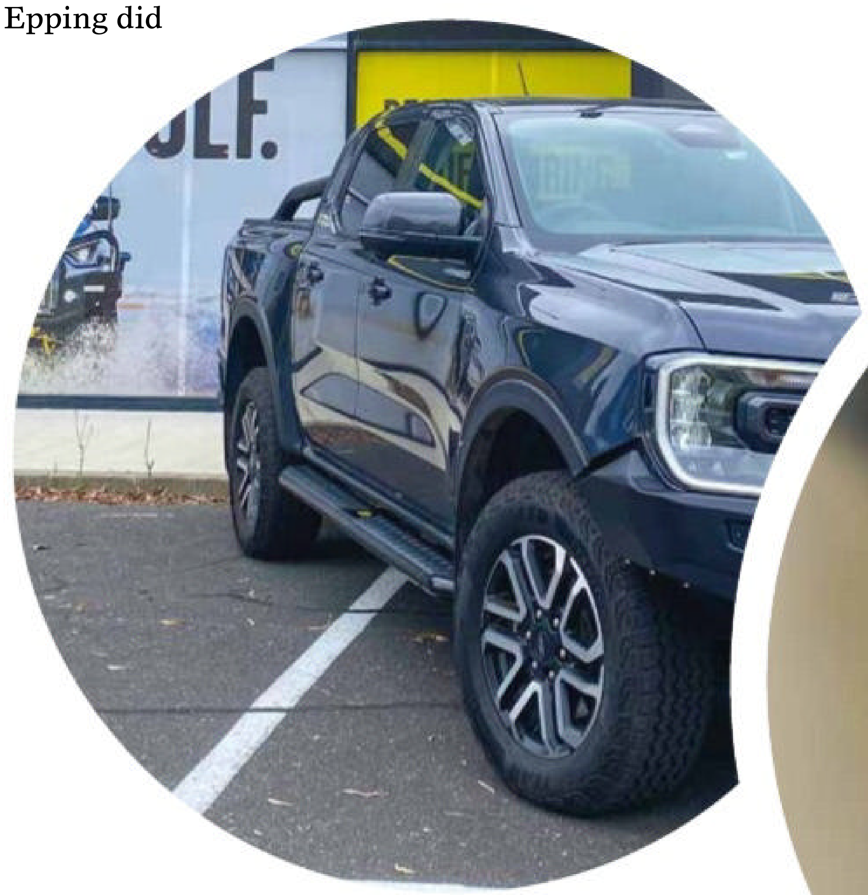
forward-facing camera for the 360° viewing on-screen has been relocated to the new bumper, and the bar itself is covered by TJM's three-year national warranty.

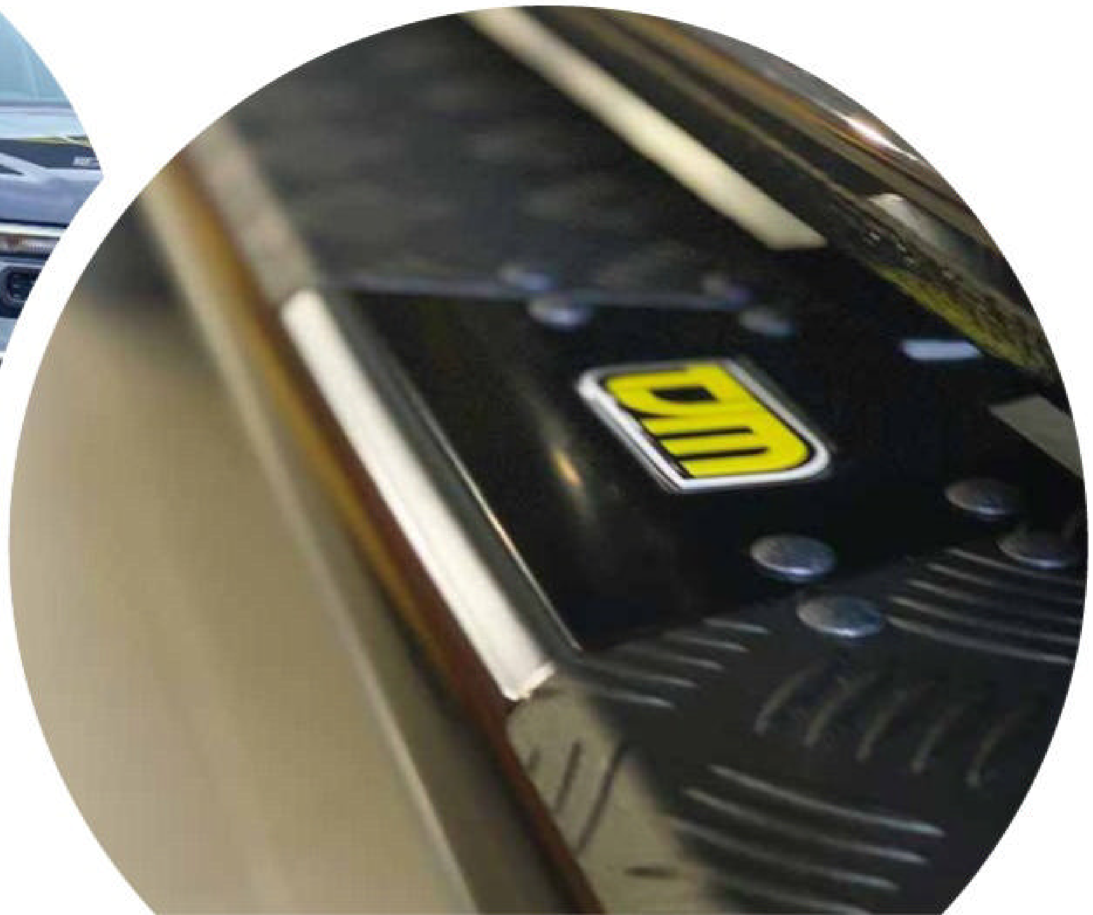
The Venturer bar is also available with a top hoop with integrated LED light bar, but we opted against it as it won't suit our planned forward lighting package. The team at TJM Epping did replace the Ranger's standard fog lamps with TJM Pod lights behind the bar.

We reckon the Venturer bar really suits the front of the Ranger, with is squared-off style and flat-top surface that mimics the Ford's flat bonnet edge. The bar also has large openings to give the user easy access to the winch to operate the free-spool clutch and plug in the controller.

## RECOVERY READY

SPEAKING of winches, that's a TJM Torq 9500lb winch wearing the signature yellow synthetic rope. The Torq winch has been engineered to suit tough Aussie conditions and is IP76 rated for dust and water ingress, has low current draw and comes with both plug-in and wireless controllers. The free-spool lever is nice and big, so it's easy to operate, unlike some winches that have smaller levers.





## UNDERSIDE ARMOUR

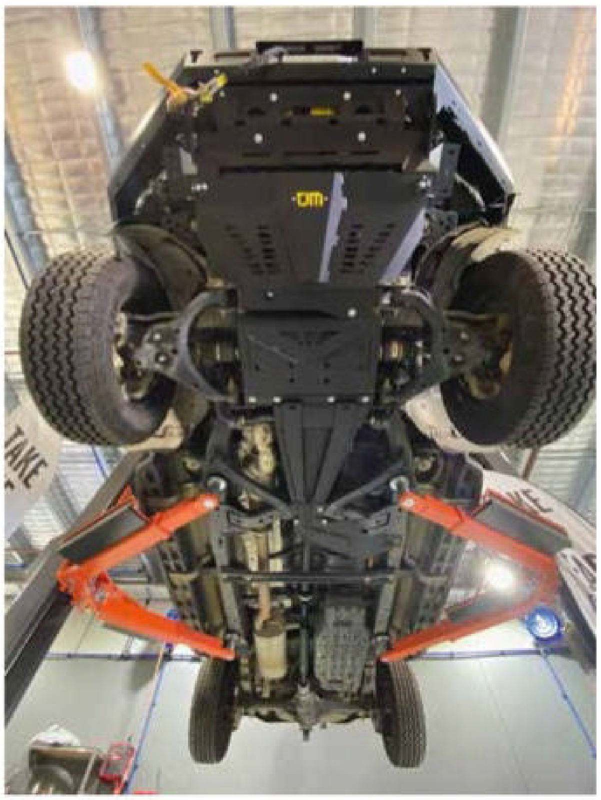
BEHIND the Venturer bar and Torq winch we have TJM underbody protection extending from the bar back under the engine sump. Made from 3mm high-strength steel that is powder-coated for its own protection, these metal plates will do a better job of protecting the Ranger's underbelly once we get it out on the tracks.

Further protection along the Ranger's sills is a pair of TJM tubular steel side-steps. More durable than the factory plastic steps, the steel steps are mounted to the chassis and not the body as the factory ones are. This will offer real protection against rocks and branches bashing the sills.

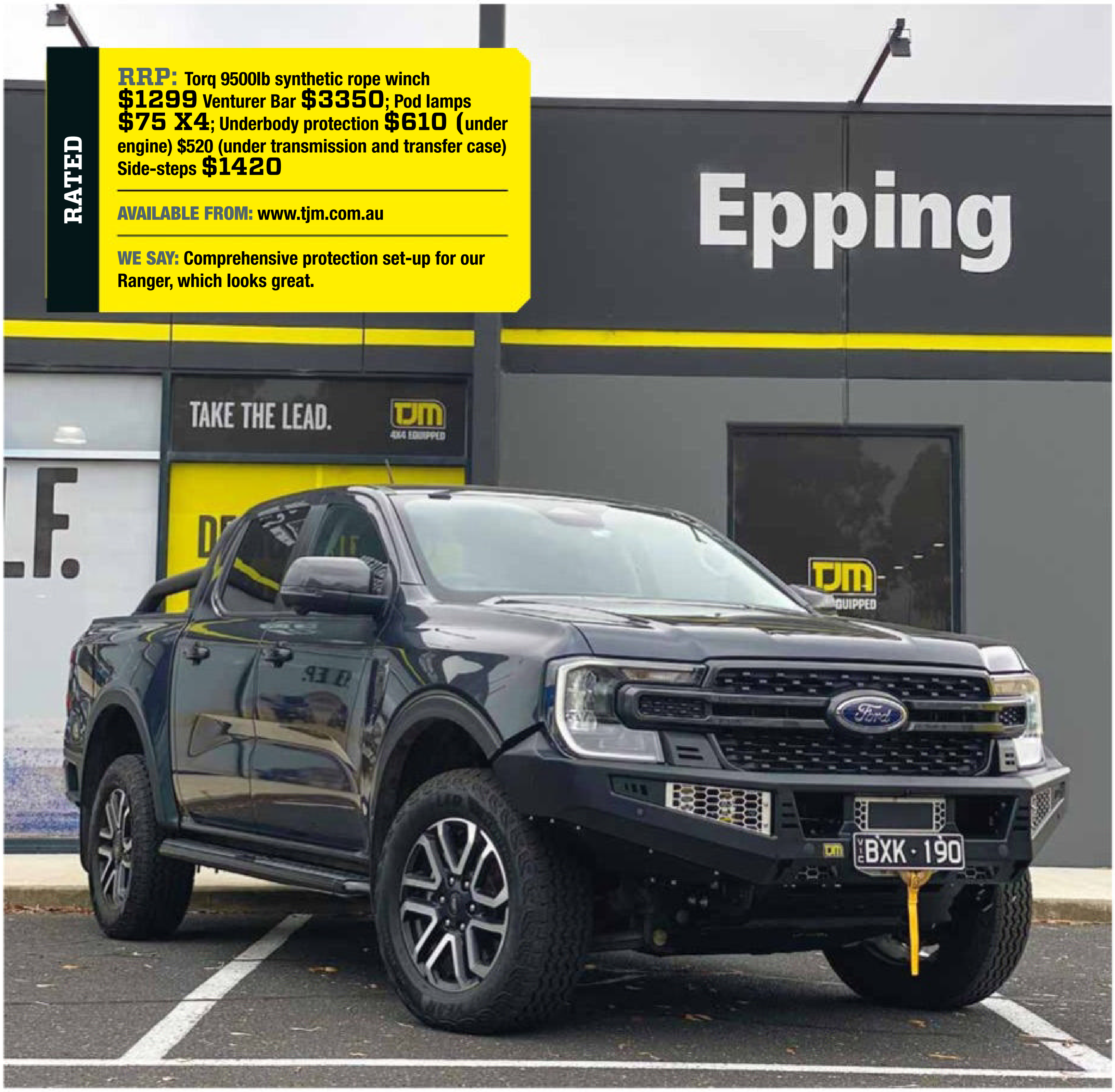
Made using 63mm powder-coated steel with black alloy checkerplate tread panels, they not only serve to protect, but look the part as well.

TJM has supplied us with a comprehensive protection set-up for our Ranger that looks great, and the addition of the winch will give us the surety of having self-recovery ability if and when needed.

Rob, Liz and the team at TJM's Epping store were great to work with from the moment we dropped the car off, explaining everything they were doing and when the car would be ready. They even helped us out with taking photographs of the installation process and we can't thank them enough.



**ARMOURED**
TJM bash plates ensure maximum proction of vital bits underneath.



**RATED**

**RRP:** Torq 9500lb synthetic rope winch **$1299** Venturer Bar **$3350**; Pod lamps **$75 X4**; Underbody protection **$610** (under engine) $520 (under transmission and transfer case) Side-steps **$1420**

**AVAILABLE FROM:** www.tjm.com.au

**WE SAY:** Comprehensive protection set-up for our Ranger, which looks great.

**TOUGH TRUCK**
Job done, the 4X4 Australia Ranger is ready for the rough and tumble.

Aerpro®
First Choice

# HEAD UNIT UPGRADE KITS
## 9/10" Multimedia Receiver
with Wireless Apple Carplay & Android Auto™

BEFORE
Menu
12:41 AM
12:41 AM
Wednesday, January 01
USB
Track 1.mp3
Apple CarPlay
Android Auto™
Radio
Bluetooth
USB

AMTO2 to suit Toyota Hilux pictured

Works with Apple CarPlay — **WIRELESS & WIRED**

androidauto — **WIRELESS & WIRED**

Bluetooth — **HANDSFREE & AUDIO**

DIRECTFIT — **VEHICLE SPECIFIC KIT**

FULL INTEGRATION — **VEHICLE FEATURES RETAINED**

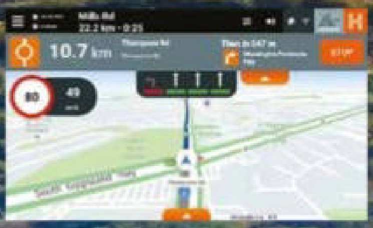
**OVER 60 APPLICATIONS NOW AVAILABLE WITH MODELS TO SUIT:**

Ford Ranger, Holden Colorado, Isuzu D-Max & MU-X, Mazda BT-50, Mitsubishi Triton, Toyota Hilux & Landcruiser, Volkswagen Amarok and many more...

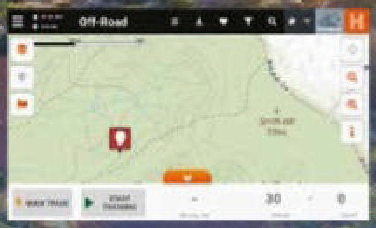
Hema maps

**AMHXD3**

# NAVIGATION MODULE WITH HEMA MAPS



**ON-ROAD NAVIGATION**



**OFF-ROAD NAVIGATION**

ON-ROAD
Turn by Turn Navigation
OFF-ROAD
4WD & Remote Touring
ADVENTURE MAPS
Hema Print Maps
Not Included, In-App Purchase Available.
HemaX

© Hema Maps 2022. Copyright.

**Add On-Road and Off-Road Navigation onto the head unit display in your vehicle.**

Compatible with selected head units, visit aerpro.com for compatibility.

AVAILABLE FROM: SUPERCHEAP AUTO autObarn Repco

and ALL AERPRO INDEPENDENT CAR AUDIO SPECIALISTS

What Fits Your Car?

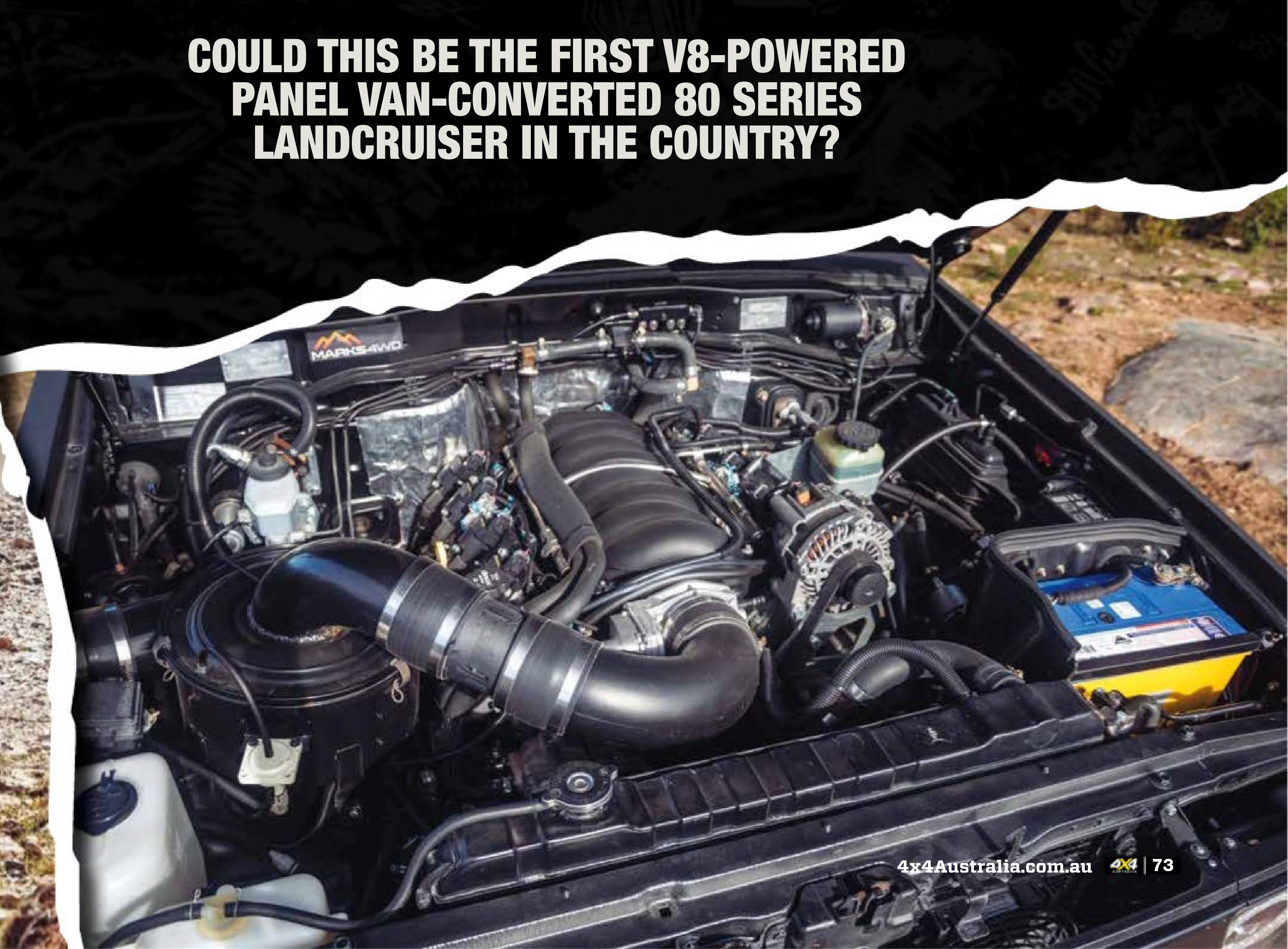
**aerpro.com**

XB·280K

**WORDS** EVAN SPENCE **PHOTOS** ELLEN DEWAR

# FRANK THE TANK

## COULD THIS BE THE FIRST V8-POWERED PANEL VAN-CONVERTED 80 SERIES LANDCRUISER IN THE COUNTRY?



MARK Boxer, the owner and builder of this unique 80 Series LandCruiser, is a car guy through and through. Not only does he love spending time getting his hands dirty building everything from his Ford Falcon drag ute to this V8-powered panel van-converted 80 Series, he also documents these builds through his company Hoon TV (we thoroughly recommend you check out his content).

Mark has had a few four-wheel drives over the years, including a highly modified Land Rover Discovery and a SWB Pajero, but decided he wanted to build an 80 Series LandCruiser this time around, after always being a fan of the 80 Series shape, overall ruggedness and reliability offered by the platform.

"Eighties have always been known for their reliability, and I always liked the shape right back to when my mate's parents bought one brand new in 1994," Mark tells us.

"I picked this one up, with typical 80 Series faded green paint and a few battle scars, from a retired couple who did lots of laps of Australia towing a caravan.

"It was pretty much stock, except for an alloy bullbar and LPG conversion, and had 450,000km on the clock when I decided to pull it all apart and begin the conversion. Not that you could tell that now, as everything is new or rebuilt – there wasn't even a spec of rust in it," he says.

Sounds like the perfect candidate for a full custom one-of-a-kind build. Let's take a closer look at Mark's 80 Series, he's affectionately named *Frank The Tank*.

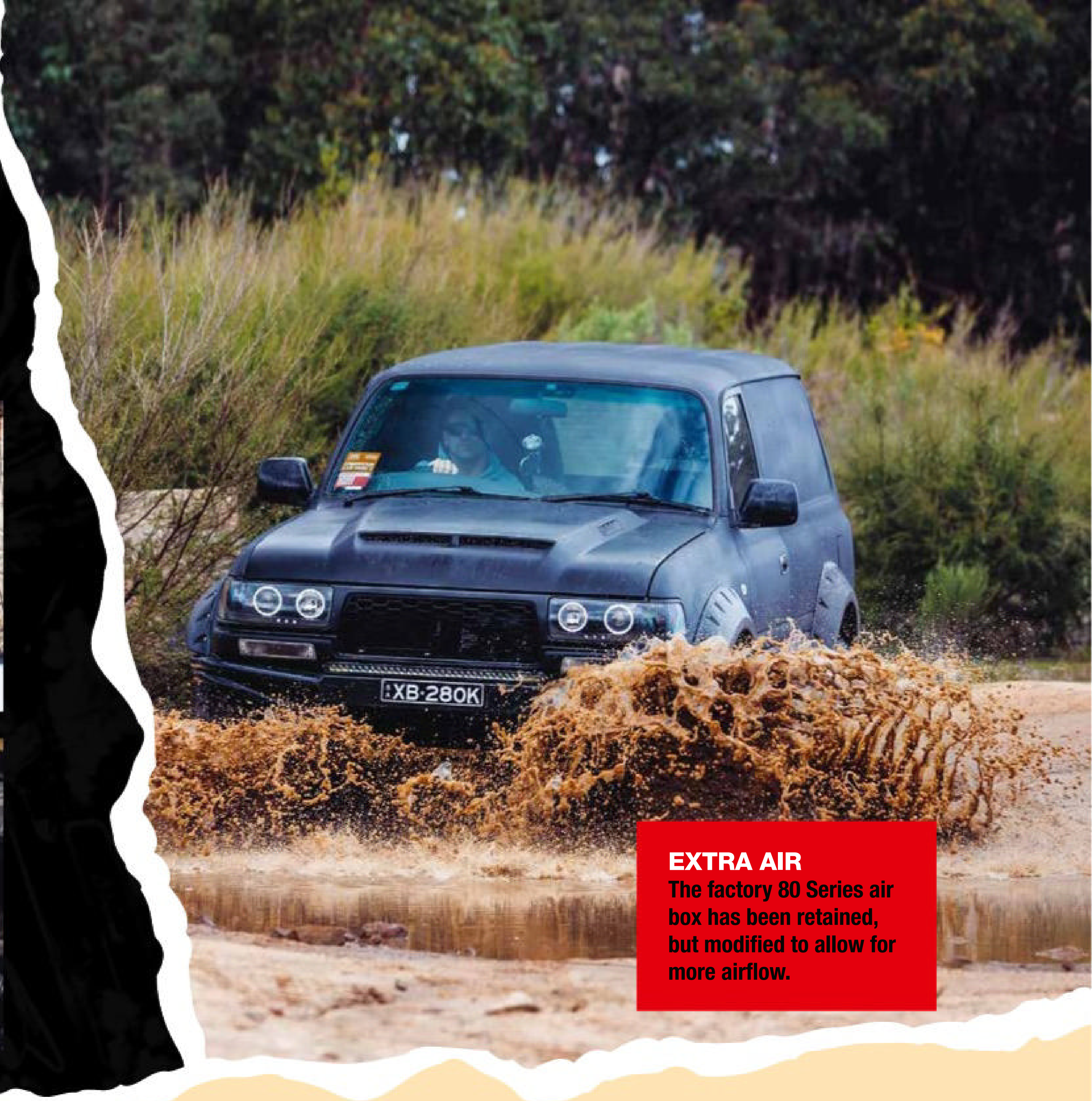
**"I PICKED THIS ONE UP, WITH TYPICAL 80 SERIES FADED GREEN PAINT AND A FEW BATTLE SCARS, FROM A RETIRED COUPLE WHO DID LOTS OF LAPS OF AUSTRALIA TOWING A CARAVAN"**

**DYI DUDE**
A custom grille and front tube bar were designed by Mark, he even handled most of the fabrication.

**LIGHT FORCE**
Projector-style headlights replace the factory candles, and provide a more modern look.

**THRIFTY V8**
Mark tells us the V8 uses less fuel than the old 4.5-litre petrol engine the 80 Series originally ran – if you don't drive like a hoon.

**ADVANCED PIPES**
**A custom 3.5-inch stainless-steel exhaust system was fabricated by Advance Headers.**



**EXTRA AIR**
**The factory 80 Series air box has been retained, but modified to allow for more airflow.**

## ENGINE AND DRIVELINE

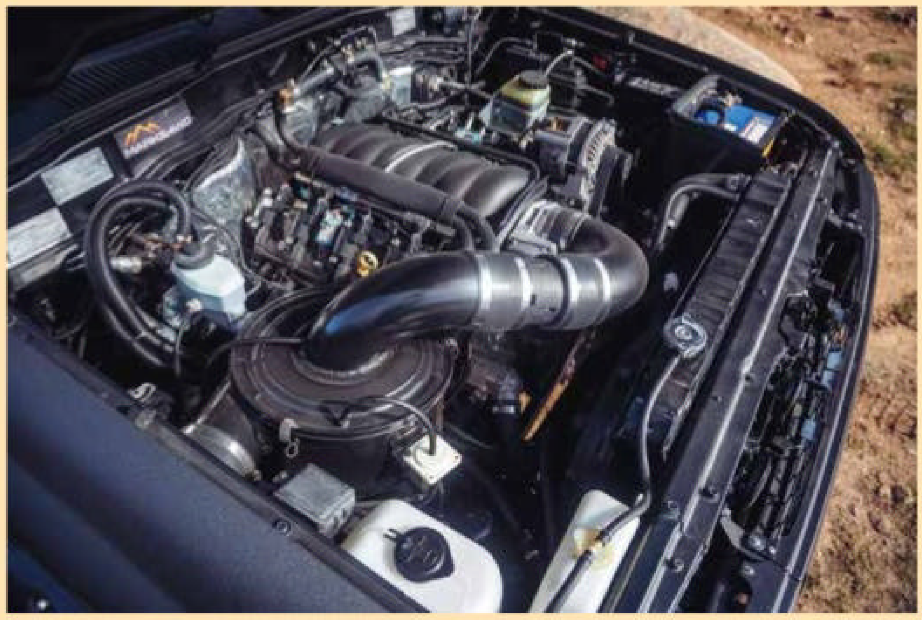
THERE was no way Mark was going to leave the stock 4.5-litre petrol-fuelled 1FZ-FE motor in this project, even though plenty of people have had good luck turbo-charging them for big power. No, Mark had his eyes (and ears) set on V8 power, and set about converting his 80 Series to a 6.0-litre L77 V8 engine from a VF Commodore W310 Walkinshaw.

Mark enlisted the help from the team at Marks 4WD Adaptors to supply the conversion kit, as well as the help of Jason from Tuff Mounts – apparently the whole conversion process was smooth sailing. Most of the work was carried out by Mark and his mates, with help from Mark's contacts at Burson Auto Parts when he needed any new or upgraded parts. And the result? On the dyno, *Frank The Tank* now makes a very healthy 211kW at the wheels.

Advance Headers in Adelaide created and fitted the exhaust system for Mark's 80 Series, to extract the most power and a nice note out of the big L77. This exhaust was fabricated from 3.5-inch mandrel-bent stainless steel, with extractors bolted to the heads. Advance Headers also ceramic-coated the exhaust, and added two mufflers to the system including an adjustable Varex muffler that allows Mark to determine how loud or quiet the system will operate.

The standard 80 Series transfer case has been retained and has proven to be up to task, as has the factory tailshaft – albeit beefed up by Hardy Spicer Adelaide. Cooling, on the other hand, needed a bit more work, with Mark enlisting the help of APM Radiators to rebuild an Adrad radiator to spec as well as include Davis Craig thermo fans, transmission and power-steering coolers.

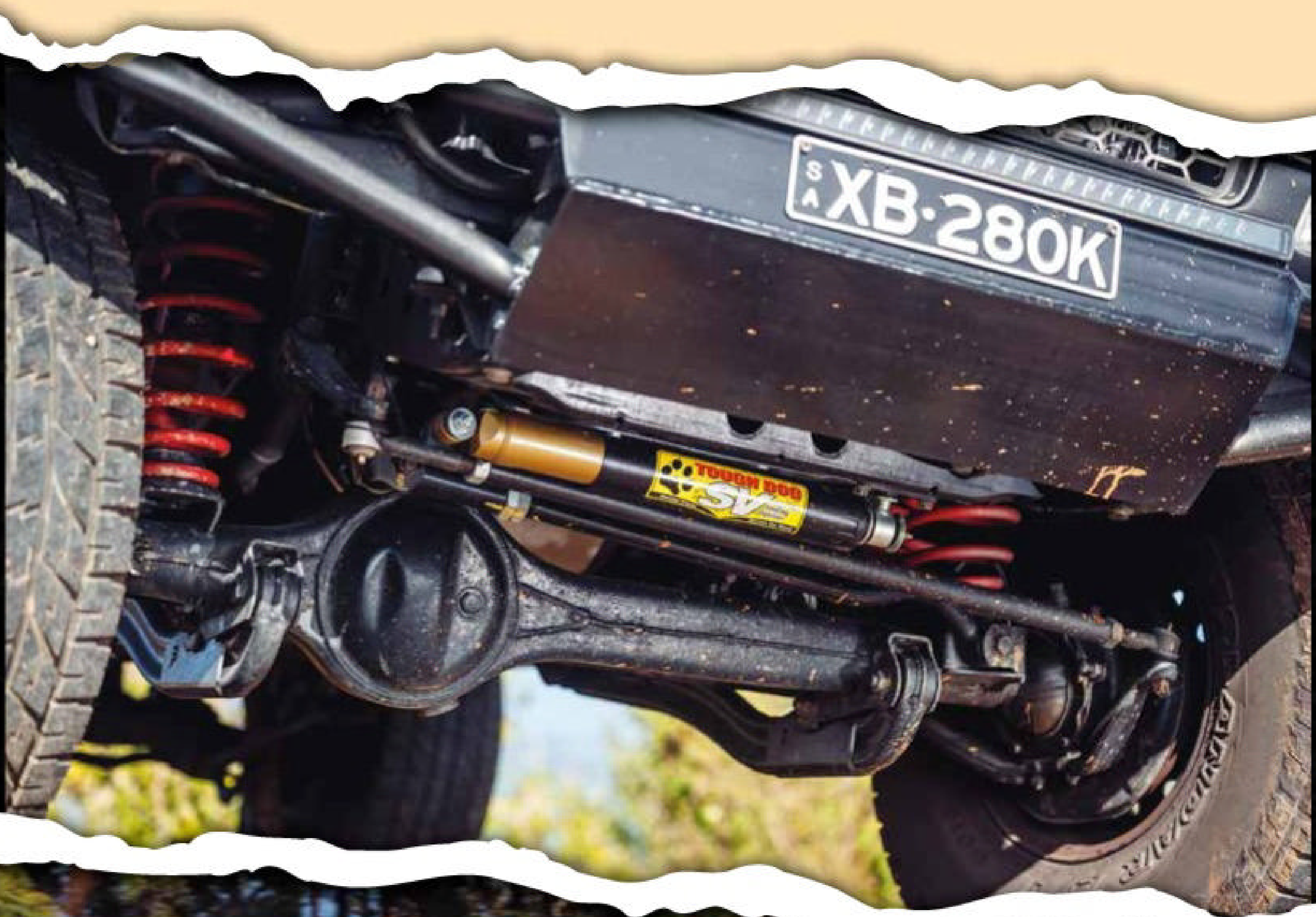
Transmission wise, Mark decided to go with a six-speed GM6L80E automatic unit, which was strengthened by MV Automatics in South Australia. This is to be further enhanced in the future, as well as adding a Dominator 2500rpm stall converter, due to Mark's other future plans which consist of installing a Harrop supercharger. Not that Mark thinks it needs more power, he just reckons they sound cool – and who are we to disagree.

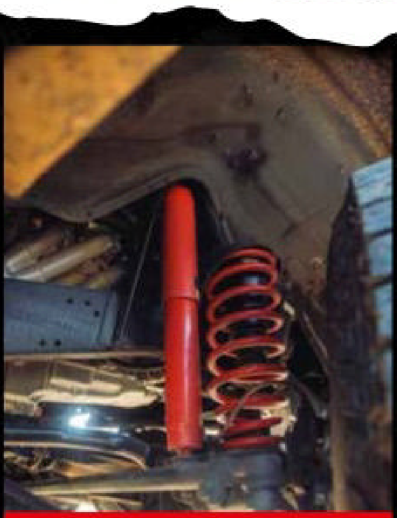


## SUSPENSION, STEERING AND BRAKES

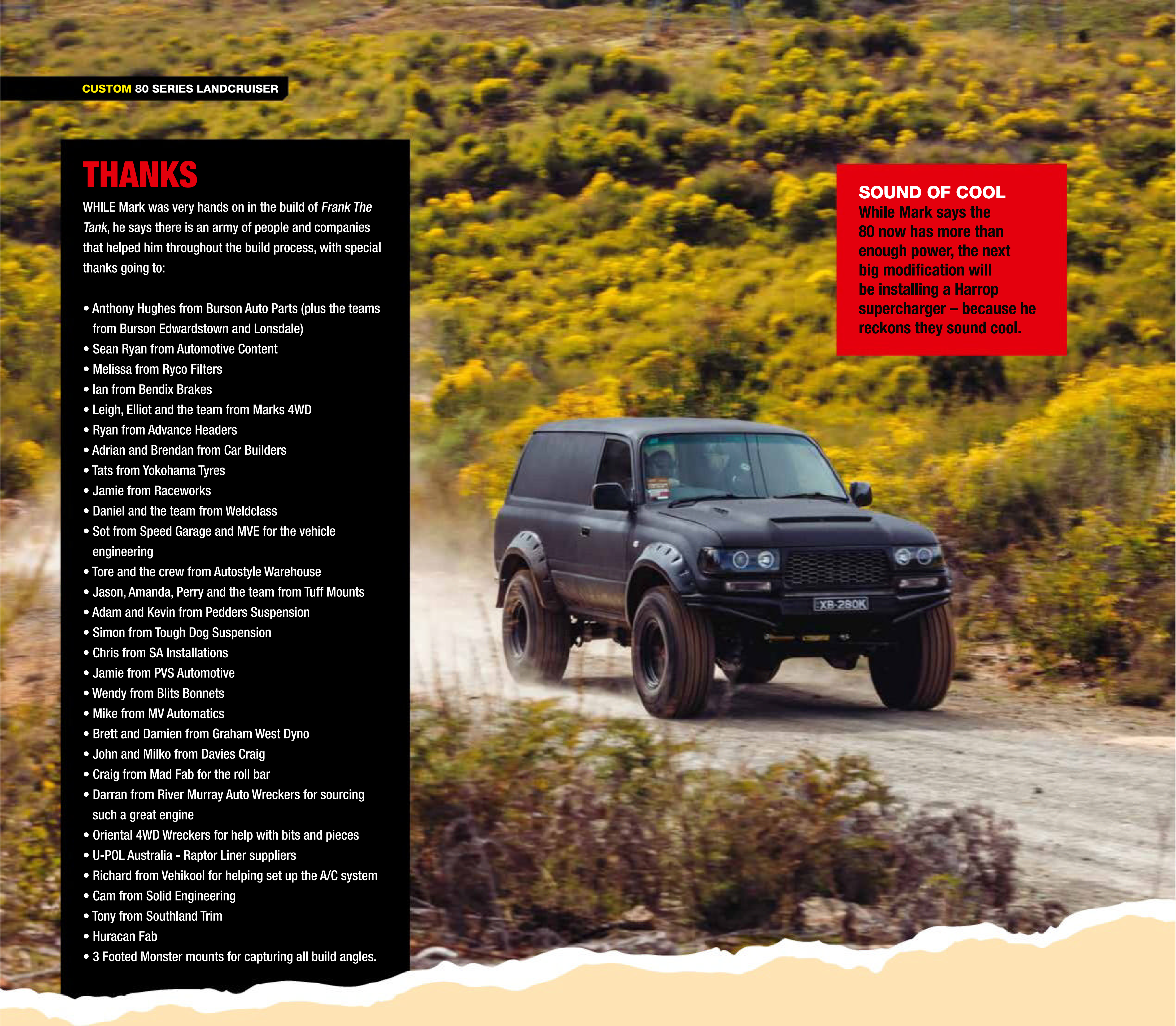
WITH much more power on tap compared to the factory offering, Mark wasted no time improving vital steering, suspension and braking components for a reliable package. New Bendix rotors and pads, as well as new stock calipers from Burson, help the big 80 stop on a dime, especially when combined with a Marks 4WD Adaptors upgraded hydraulic brake booster, which applies double the line pressure to the system over stock.

Pedders Keswick landed the job of upgrading the factory suspension, with Mark saying the team was a real help. The vehicle has been raised two inches overall using Pedders TrakRyder shocks and springs. SuperPro front radius arms were also fitted for castor correction, and longer lower trailing arms in the rear help with correcting the pinion angle while adding strength. Pedders also fitted a new replacement steering box and Pedders drag link, then Mark added a Tough Dog adjustable steering damper, rounding out a neat yet nice and simple suspension package.





**CARPET RIDE**
**Pedders suspension with SuperPro radius arms and Tough Dog steering damper round out the suspension package.**



## THANKS

WHILE Mark was very hands on in the build of *Frank The Tank*, he says there is an army of people and companies that helped him throughout the build process, with special thanks going to:

- Anthony Hughes from Burson Auto Parts (plus the teams from Burson Edwardstown and Lonsdale)
- Sean Ryan from Automotive Content
- Melissa from Ryco Filters
- Ian from Bendix Brakes
- Leigh, Elliot and the team from Marks 4WD
- Ryan from Advance Headers
- Adrian and Brendan from Car Builders
- Tats from Yokohama Tyres
- Jamie from Raceworks
- Daniel and the team from Weldclass
- Sot from Speed Garage and MVE for the vehicle engineering
- Tore and the crew from Autostyle Warehouse
- Jason, Amanda, Perry and the team from Tuff Mounts
- Adam and Kevin from Pedders Suspension
- Simon from Tough Dog Suspension
- Chris from SA Installations
- Jamie from PVS Automotive
- Wendy from Blits Bonnets
- Mike from MV Automatics
- Brett and Damien from Graham West Dyno
- John and Milko from Davies Craig
- Craig from Mad Fab for the roll bar
- Darran from River Murray Auto Wreckers for sourcing such a great engine
- Oriental 4WD Wreckers for help with bits and pieces
- U-POL Australia - Raptor Liner suppliers
- Richard from Vehikool for helping set up the A/C system
- Cam from Solid Engineering
- Tony from Southland Trim
- Huracan Fab
- 3 Footed Monster mounts for capturing all build angles.

## SOUND OF COOL

**While Mark says the 80 now has more than enough power, the next big modification will be installing a Harrop supercharger – because he reckons they sound cool.**

## BODY MODS

AS the factory green paint job had seen better days, Mark saw this as an opportunity to do something different and converted his 80 Series into a two-door panel van.

"We fully welded up the doors and windows on the 80 Series to turn it into a panel van," says Mark. "Everything is properly braced, with all gaps filled correctly and no corners cut. As well as the panel van conversion, we went one step further and removed all side trims, welded the holes, deleted all chrome off the vehicle, as well as deleting the rear wiper, washer and lock."

With the body work out of the way, the 80 was desperate for fresh paint, and Mark took the opportunity to apply a few coats of black Raptor Liner to the exterior. He also had a mate with CAD experience design a custom grille, and also fitted a Blits bonnet, a fully ADR-approved aftermarket bonnet that Mark says helps to improve airflow and cooling.

Inside the 80 Series, an internal four-point roll cage was fabricated and installed, and is used mainly as a place to mount a spare tyre as well as Mark's high-lift jack. Seats were also upgraded to a set of FG Falcon items, bolted in place with a conversion kit from Huracan Fabrication, and they're far more comfortable than the factory offerings. New seat belts were fitted at the same time, as well as a PVS steering wheel with full working audio controls and paddle shifting.

Mark also designed and built a custom centre console, which he had trimmed by Tony at Southland Trim, and the entire interior has been lined with Car Builders sound insulation and heat shielding to make the most of the Axis audio system complete with subwoofer. The 80 Series sounds good on the outside, so it may as well sound good on the inside too.

**AT THE WHEEL**
**The PVS steering wheel not only looks and feels the part, Mark went to the effort of having audio controls and paddle shifting wired up.**

## TOURING MODS

ON the front of *Frank*, Mark and his mate Tore custom-built a steel-tube front bar which really suits the look of the vehicle. This was powder-coated instead of painted, and provides the perfect mounting platform for a Roadvision Stealth LED light bar which works well in conjunction with a set of upgraded projector-style headlights.

As this is Mark's touring and cruising machine, he decided to upgrade the tyres to 35-inch Yokohama units, but stayed with an all-terrain pattern for the best of both worlds handling-wise. These are mounted to 16-inch Dynamic steel wheels, which are practical yet suit the blacked-out exterior to a tee.

Lockers rule off-road, and Mark is a smart dude, so while he had the diffs out to fit 4.1 ratio Terrain Tamer crown wheel and pinons, he had a rear Harrop ELocker installed at the same time. So far this is enough for his needs, and he has no plans to fit a front locker. Special chromoly crush tubes were installed while the diffs were rebuilt, as were a set of heavy-duty billet floater axles from Road Runner Offroad to help add even more strength to the rear end – when you are turning 35s with a big V8, you need all the help you can get.

# RAMBLE ON

## QUEENSLAND'S RAMBLER VEHICLES IS A ONE-STOP SHOP PRODUCING TURN-KEY, FULLY-EQUIPPED TOURING 4X4 VEHICLES AND DELIVERING THEM WITH THE FULL NEW-CAR EXPERIENCE

WORDS MATT RAUDONIKIS

REGULAR readers of *4X4 Australia* will have seen quite a few fully kitted 4x4 rigs from Rambler Vehicles featured within these pages. There's good reason we keep coming back to Rambler rigs, as they are complete packages for off-road touring. Comprehensive turnkey vehicles modified and equipped for off-road escapades anywhere around Australia.

The builds we've come to appreciate from Rambler have been high-end tourers built to go anywhere and sustain off-grid living. More often than not they are Toyota LandCruiser-based – either LC79 or 200, often chopped and stretched – but we've also seen a Hilux and a few Isuzu D-MAXes from the Brisbane-based workshop.

The builds start with new vehicles that undergo bumper-to-bumper transformations, to deliver a touring rig created to suit the customer's plans and expectations. The customer then takes delivery of a new 4x4 that is completely ready to hit the road and go travelling around the country. Rambler looks after registration (NSW and Queensland only) and can deliver vehicles nationwide.

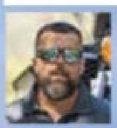
They even give a nationwide three-year/100,000km warranty on all accessories and modifications, regardless of the manufacturer's warranty. Vehicles also come with a free first Rambler Service to check over all the mods.

Moving into 2023, Rambler is ready to unveil its first LandCruiser 300 build and also reveal the packages it has been working on for full-size American utes like the Chevrolet Silverado 1500.

But who are Rambler Vehicles and what makes its builds so special? We spent some time with Rambler Vehicles' director Kris Humphries to find out.

RAMBLER VEHICLES
RAMBLER VEHICLES

**4X4 Australia: What is Rambler Vehicles?**



**Kris:** Rambler is essentially a one-stop specialist vehicle and accessory broker. We work with the client to understand their needs and wants. We help select the best platform (vehicle) and best fit-out for their needs, taking into account GVM, GCM and towing requirements. We plan the build down to the last detail.

**4X4 Australia: What are customers looking for in their 4x4 builds?**

**Kris:** Most of our customers are looking for all-inclusive touring packages. Most common requirements are GVM/GCM upgrades, interior upgrades – improved comfort in the seats, leather, sound deadening and stereo upgrades. Also, 12V battery systems and upright fridges are a part of most builds.

**4X4 Australia: So once you know what the client wants, how does the build progress?**

**Kris:** We source the vehicle and accessories and then carry out the modifications, quality assurance and commissioning all in-house. We even offer finance and insurance options, making Rambler a true one-stop shop.

**4X4 Australia: Rambler builds always use some of the best aftermarket products available, what are some of the key brands you work with?**

**Kris:** We are always guided by the customer's needs, however we do have preferred brands due to the quality and after-sales support they offer. These include Lightforce, Carmans Auto Upholstery, ASG4X4, Superior Engineering, Outback Armour, TJM 4x4, Alpine, Toyo Tyres and Offroad Industries 4x4.

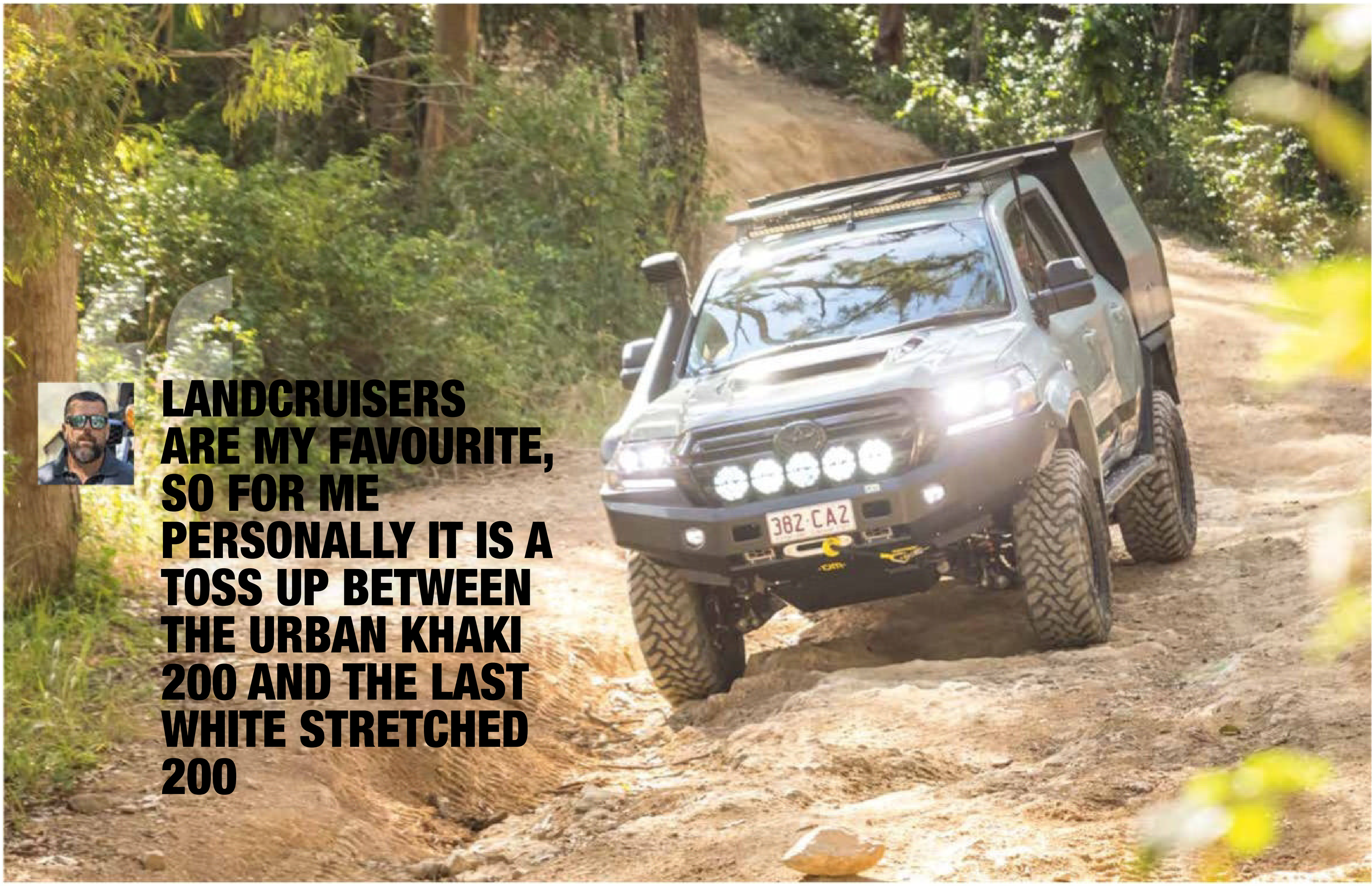
**4X4 Australia: You mentioned TJM 4x4. You also own a TJM store, so is TJM gear compulsory on a Rambler?**

**Kris:** Rambler is 100 per cent separate. It's its own business, in its own facility. We still utilise a large amount of TJM product because we know it and trust it, but we are not locked to the brand. We can and have fitted ARB, Outback Armour, Superior Engineering and Offroad Animal products to Rambler builds.

**4X4 Australia: Spinifex is another brand we see on a lot of Rambler builds.**

**Kris:** Spinifex Manufacturing is our business and it complements Rambler. It is our manufacturing and 12V business, so we use it for our canopies, trays, power boards and custom fabrication. We have customers who select other brands of canopies and trays, and Spinifex still supports this with internal fit-out and equipment.

RAMBLER VEHICLES



> **LANDCRUISERS ARE MY FAVOURITE, SO FOR ME PERSONALLY IT IS A TOSS UP BETWEEN THE URBAN KHAKI 200 AND THE LAST WHITE STRETCHED 200**

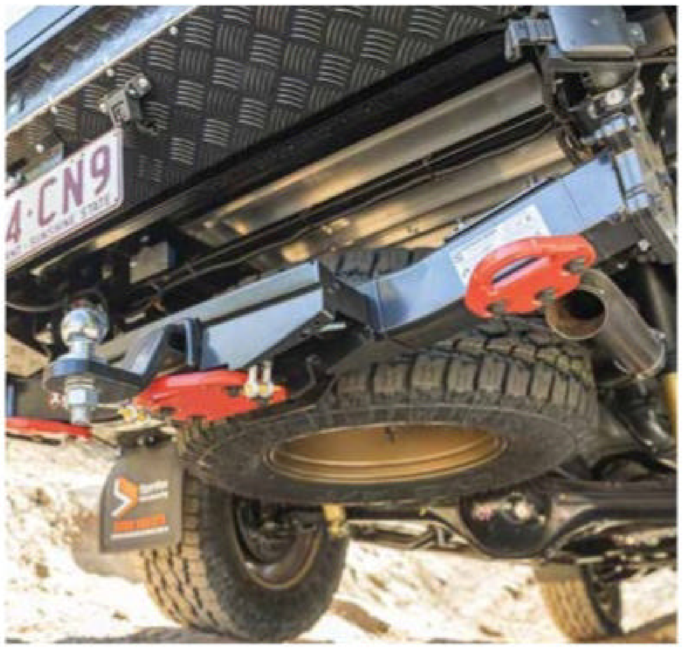
**4X4 Australia: Between Rambler, Spinifex and TJM businesses, you are very much focused on 4x4 vehicles. Tell us about your own 4x4s.**

**Kris:** I have been in the 4WD and outdoor leisure industry for more than 20 years. I'm an auto electrician by trade and have had a passion for cars from a young age.

My second car was a 1.0-litre Suzuki Sierra 4x4 and that's where the passion for exploring started. Since then I have owned Jeeps, Hiluxes, Patrols, LandCruisers, Pathfinders, Suzukis, even a couple of Land Rovers. Currently I drive a Chevy Silverado.

**4X4 Australia: What's been your favourite Rambler build?**

**Kris:** LandCruisers are my favourite, so for me personally it is a toss up between the Urban Khaki 200 and the last white stretched 200 recently featured – both cars I wish we had kept.



**4X4 Australia: Rambler is not just yourself, who else is behind the business?**
**Kris:** Brad Russell is the other driving force behind Rambler. We have been business partners for the last decade. Brad is Mt Isa born and raised in the mines. He's a Toyota man through and through and loves his 70 Series Cruisers. He currently drives a 79 Series.

**4X4 Australia: Between Kris and Brad they have more than 50 years and tens of thousands of kilometres of experience in the 4x4 and touring business. It's this experience that gives them intimate knowledge of what's required of a touring 4x4 vehicle, and the best parts and processes needed to achieve it. Backing them up at Rambler HQ are Dean Urda, customer experience manager, and Shai Smith, procurement and logistics manager, both experienced and enthusiastic four-wheel drivers.**
**4X4 Australia: Have the needs of clients changed over the years you have been doing Rambler?**
**Kris:** I wouldn't say our customers' needs have changed, however our offering has as we have better understood what our customers actually do and what works and what doesn't work. We constantly review and assess what we do and why. We are far from perfect and rely on feedback (good, bad and ugly) from our customers to improve and refine what we do.

**4X4 Australia: What's new and exciting from Rambler in 2023?**
**Kris:** We will be launching our first 300 dual-cab build in conjunction with ASG at the Brisbane 4x4 show (March 17 to 19). We are also excited about our American truck program also launching at the Brisbane show. We will be debuting our new Chevy 1500 series platform built for Australian touring. We also have some really exciting GVM- and GCM-based programs for the Chevy being launched in conjunction with Touring Solutions Australia and Offroad Industries.

**4X4 Australia: It sounds like there's no slowing down for the team at Rambler Vehicles, and the year ahead will be loaded with exciting new builds using the latest vehicles on the market. If you're at the Brisbane 4x4 Show in March, be sure to drop by the Rambler stand to check out the latest builds, otherwise get on the Rambler website and in contact with the team to make your dream 4x4 build a reality.**

KS 2199
TOYOTA

WORDS AND PHOTOS KEV SMITH

# WOOPI DO

## WOOLGOOLGA IS THE 4WD CAPITAL OF NSW, SO HEAD TO THE STATE'S MID-NORTH COAST FOR THE BEST BEACH AND BUSH ADVENTURES

WOOLGOOLGA (or Woopi, to the locals) is quickly becoming a beachside boutique town, on the north coast of NSW. The aborigines called it 'Wei-gul-ga' which came from a tree that bore berries and turned purple when ripe. Woopi is also known for its Sikh population, where they have made this town their home, built amazing temples and hold festivals each year; but it's the hinterland located close to the coast that holds many interesting features.

Woopi was settled back in the 1870s and prior to that the Gumbaynggirr Aboriginal people had this place all to themselves, with excellent fishing, plenty of local animals to hunt, and cropping in the fertile soil.

By 1883, the early settlers saw the value of the timber in the hills and timber cutters soon moved in. Bush sawmills were established, and timber tramlines ran from the beach all the way into the hinterland to transport the heavy logs to waiting ships. With this, a huge (nearly 500m) jetty was built to accommodate the ships, to carry the timber away and to bring goods back to Woopi. Originally, a shorter jetty was built by an early settler named William Pullen, but needing a longer one the government stepped in and extended it. Over the years, bashing from ships and storm damage soon made it unsafe. Sadly, in the 1960s the jetty was deemed dangerous and it was blown up and dismantled.

The infamous Buster (a local shipwreck icon) was moored here back in 1893 when a huge storm broke the ropes, and all 198 tonnes of Buster floated ashore where it now lays rotting away, only exposed at low tides after storms.

## TIMBER AND GOLD

IN the bush, there are very few signs of any infrastructure the pioneers established; you might find the odd timber loading ramp and a 4WD track named after a bush hero, but nothing else. The BAT (British Australian Timber Co) infrastructure has been pulled up, and rail lines and huge pulleys that ran cable to the hills from the harbour are now gone. The only significant piece of history left is a rail trolley with a log attached, hidden away behind the local art gallery.

When the men logged the area, gold was also found in vast locations. One of the main mines was located right where the town pub (Seaview Tavern) is today; while up in the bush there are still shafts, drives and a section called Nuggety Gully where there was a small community.

Back in the 1940s there was a sugar mill around town, aeroplanes often landed and were tied up to the jetty, and the local community held horse races on the main beach. Bananas soon took over the landscape and at the turn of the century Sikhs were migrating to the town, where today Woolgoolga has the largest regional Sikh/Punjabi population in Australia.

### FIVE FAST FACTS

**01**

**WHERE**

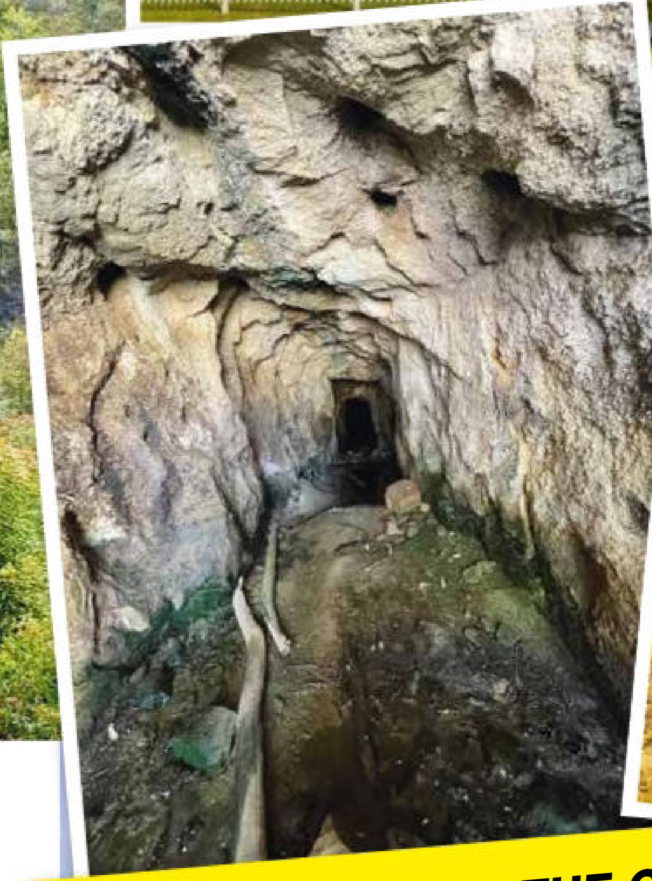
Situated on New South Wales' mid-north coast, Woolgoolga is some 25km north of Coffs Harbour. With two Pacific Ocean beaches, the picturesque town is popular with adventure seekers offering whale watching, surfing and fishing, as well as access to mountain bike and 4WD tracks.

## FIVE FAST FACTS

### 02

**ACCOMMODATION**

As Woolgoolga is on the popular-with-tourists Banana Coast there is no shortage of caravan parks, hotels and resorts to base oneself. For those who like to free-camp, there are plenty of excellent spots in the adjacent forested ranges.



# WOOLO OGLGA

AT THE TURN OF THE CENTURY SIKHS WERE MIGRATING TO THE TOWN, WHERE TODAY WOOLGOOLGA HAS THE LARGEST REGIONAL SIKH/PUNJABI POPULATION IN AUSTRALIA

## GREAT NORTHERN MILL

WHERE the bowling club now resides once stood the largest hardwood company outside of Sydney, owned by the Great Northern Mill. It was so large the company owned the tramlines that led into the forest. The first post office was built around 1892 inside a general store, but by 1898 a dedicated PO was built and was moved three times afterwards, finally finding a home where it is now in the original Woopi Plaza. Another building that has been lost is the Woolgoolga Theatre, which was built next door to the tavern up in River Street – sadly this building was never saved.

Today, Woolgoolga is known for its natural beauty, where there are plenty of 4WD trails leading to stunning views across the region and waterfalls that fall into beautiful rainforests. Woopi is also now known as a whale-watching capital due to how close the whales come to the headland. A small consolation for the area is a heritage walking trail around town that allows you to explore and discover a few of the iconic buildings downtown.

However, it's the proximity of the mountains that also attracts hoards of people to the area, with mega amounts of off-road, motocross and walking trails scattered throughout the nearby forest. From Woolgoolga's headland you can see just how close the Great Dividing Range comes down to the sea, and apparently it's one of the closest on the whole east coast.

I have been exploring and driving the tracks here for nearly 30 years, and I might sound a bit biased but there's nowhere else better to explore – it's possible to head into the forest areas and not see another 4WDer or bike rider for days.

### FIVE FAST FACTS

**03**

**GLENREAGH**

Loop trails through the forests west of Woolgoolga eventually lead to the timber heritage town of Glenreagh in the Clarence Valley. Here you'll find the popular Golden Dog Hotel offering great food, beer and accommodation. It gets busy here on weekends but is a top spot for lunch before off-roading it back to the coast.

W●●L●
●GLGA

**WOOLGOOLGA IS KNOWN FOR ITS NATURAL BEAUTY, WHERE THERE ARE PLENTY OF 4WD TRAILS LEADING TO STUNNING VIEWS ACROSS THE REGION AND WATERFALLS THAT FALL INTO RAINFORESTS**

MY DIRTY ADVENTURE
BY @MEGUIARS_AUSTRALIA

GET DIRTY AND WIN!

#MyDirtyAdventure

SHOOT AND UPLOAD A PIC OF YOUR ADVENTURE
USING OUR INSTA AND FACEBOOK 'BUCKET' FILTER
TO WIN A RANGE OF MEGUIAR'S CAR CARE PRODUCTS.
FOR MORE INFO GO TO **MEGUIARS.COM.AU**

**TO LEARN MORE**

TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY. SEE WEBSITE FOR DETAILS.

MY DIRTY Adventure™

Meguiar's Since 1901

## HOW CLOSE ARE THE TRACKS?

FROM Woolgoolga's main street its an easy 5km drive west to the start of the maze of trails. The area is known for a mix of touring and challenging tracks because of the Great Divide, and the ridge-top views are to die for. You'll often see the ocean on one side, and then just down the road along another spur the views to the west across farmlands are just as grand.

With the amount of solid tracks around the area there's really no right or wrong way to head, but just remember if you head down some tracks it may be lead to a funky hill climb out the other side. Weather plays a role in some of the tracks along the ridge lines, as severe rainstorms often gouge out ruts in the soft, slippery soil.

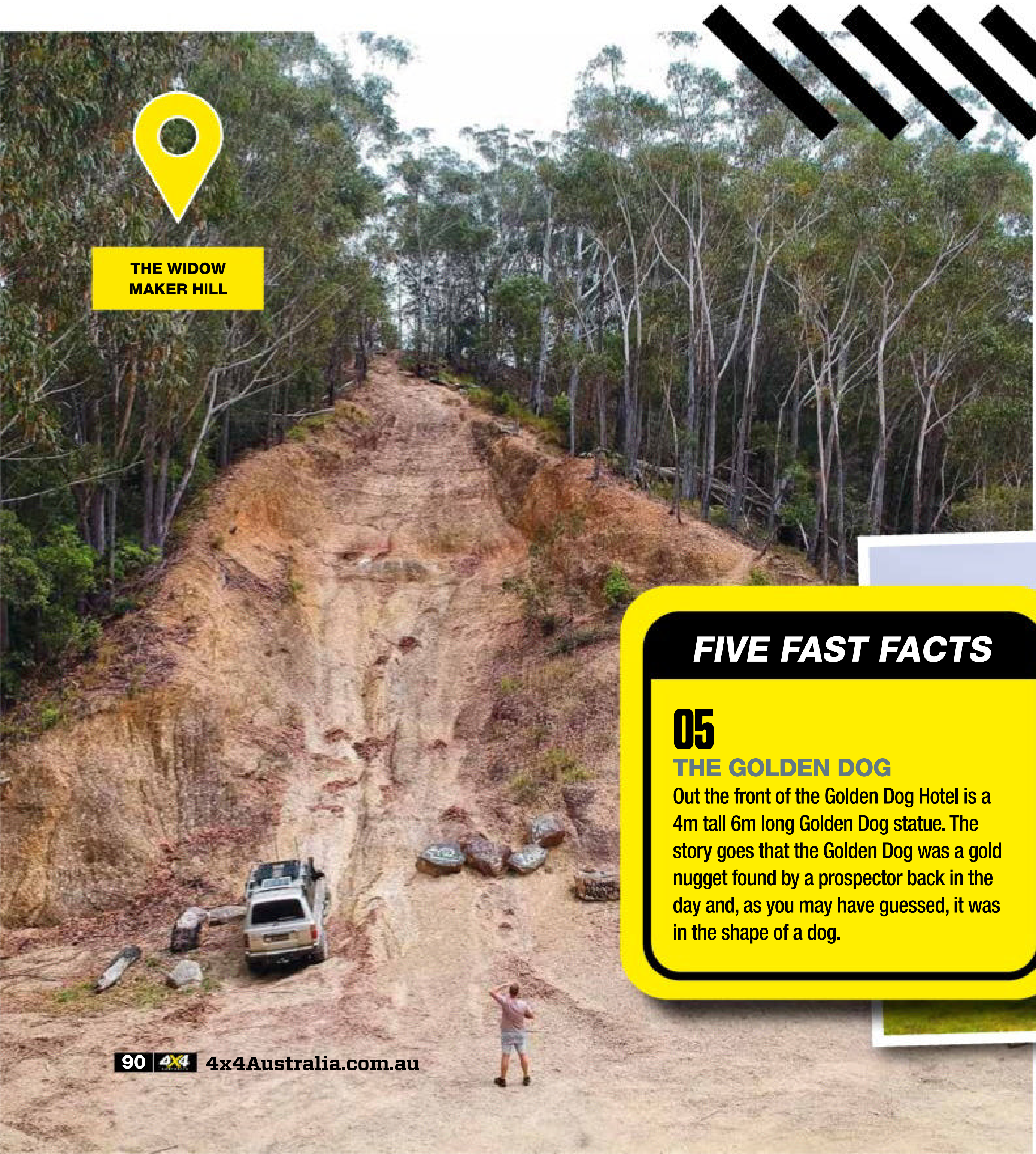
Several loop trails lead around different ridge-lines, down to waterfalls and along spur roads, eventually ending up in the next valley to the west at Glenreagh. The small country village has a bakery, a fuel and coffee shop, and a large dog outside The Golden Dog Hotel, iconic for its cold beverages and large feeds. It's usually pretty packed on the weekends with locals, bike riders and 4WDers who head here for a feed then 4WD it back to the coast.

This region is known as the 4WD capital of NSW and there's no shortage of challenging hardcore tracks. Names like The Steps, Jeep, Carnage, Cullens and the infamous Widow Maker will test both man and machine. Nearly all of the bush behind Woolgoolga is State Forest, so you can be rest assured there'll be no locked-up areas; but active logging continues year round, so be wary of the warning signs and machinery. It's definitely a bonus for 4WDers, as the machines clear overgrown tracks, fix rundown timber bridges and knock the lantana away from the tracks.

Camping options are top notch in the area, too. If you're happy to free camp there are many areas to pitch a swag and wake up to beautiful sunrises, or hop across to the other side of the ridge and watch the sun go down. Along the coast there are hip caravan parks, a couple of great showgrounds in the area, and fancy resorts on the shoreline.

I can't think of many other destinations where you can drop the other half off at the shops, kids at the beach and head bush with your mates so close to the coast, yet be back in time for dinner after knocking over some pretty cool tracks. My advice is to find some locals to guide you, use a good quality GPS that runs detailed 1:25 thou maps, and head into the local 4WD shop for more advice.

The Coffs Coast seems to have it all sorted.

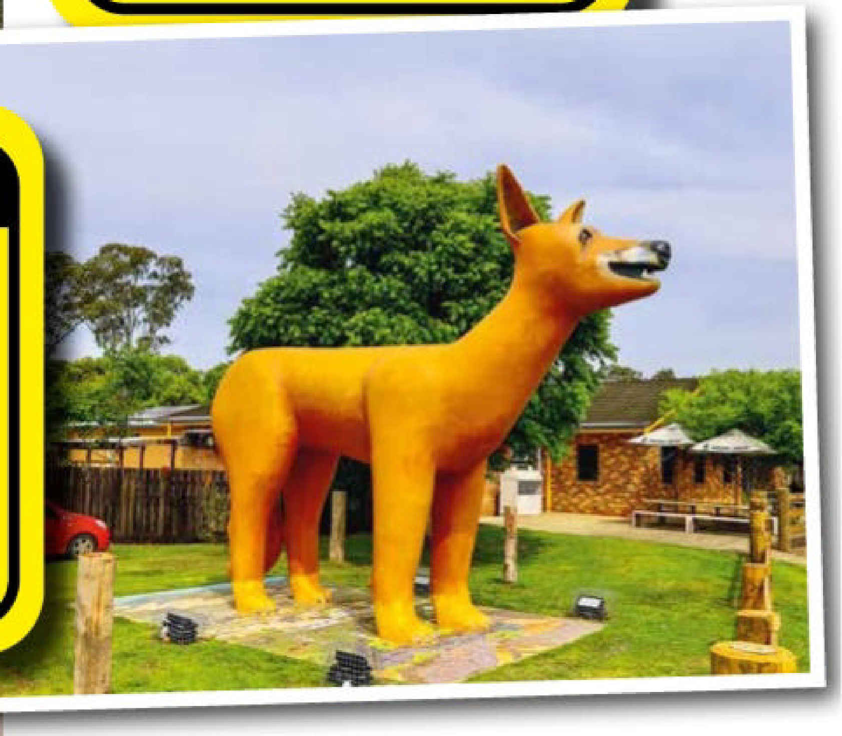


### FIVE FAST FACTS

**04**

**OFF-ROADING**

Woolgoolga is regarded as the 4WD capital of NSW, (the author might be a bit biased in this-Ed) as almost all of the bush behind Woolgoolga is State Forest where there are no locked-up areas and a maze of tracks to tackle. Try out your off-roading abilities and your machine's capability on tracks such as The Steps, Jeep, Carnage, Cullens and the infamous Widow Maker. Plus there a great views of the coast and farmlands to the west.



### FIVE FAST FACTS

**05**

**THE GOLDEN DOG**

Out the front of the Golden Dog Hotel is a 4m tall 6m long Golden Dog statue. The story goes that the Golden Dog was a gold nugget found by a prospector back in the day and, as you may have guessed, it was in the shape of a dog.

# CUSTOM TRAY BODIES
# CUSTOM CANOPIES
# CUSTOM VEHICLE FITOUTS

PROUD CANOPY SUPPLIER OF THE
4X4 AUSTRALIA
PROJECT RANGER

**AMVE 4x4** specialise in cutting edge design ,manufacture and fitting of all aftermarket accessories to any 4x4 utility. Our standard range includes Heavy duty custom built steel tray bodies, Heavy duty custom built aluminium tray bodies, Custom made dog cages, Toolbox's and custom built aluminium canopies. We also offer full custom vehicle builds and turn key packages. Our friendly experienced team of qualified staff aim to provide our customers with the highest possible standard of service along with a high quality product.

A.M.V.E 4x4
AMVE4X4
AMVE
A.M.V.E 4x4
A.M.V.E 4x4

AMVE 4X4

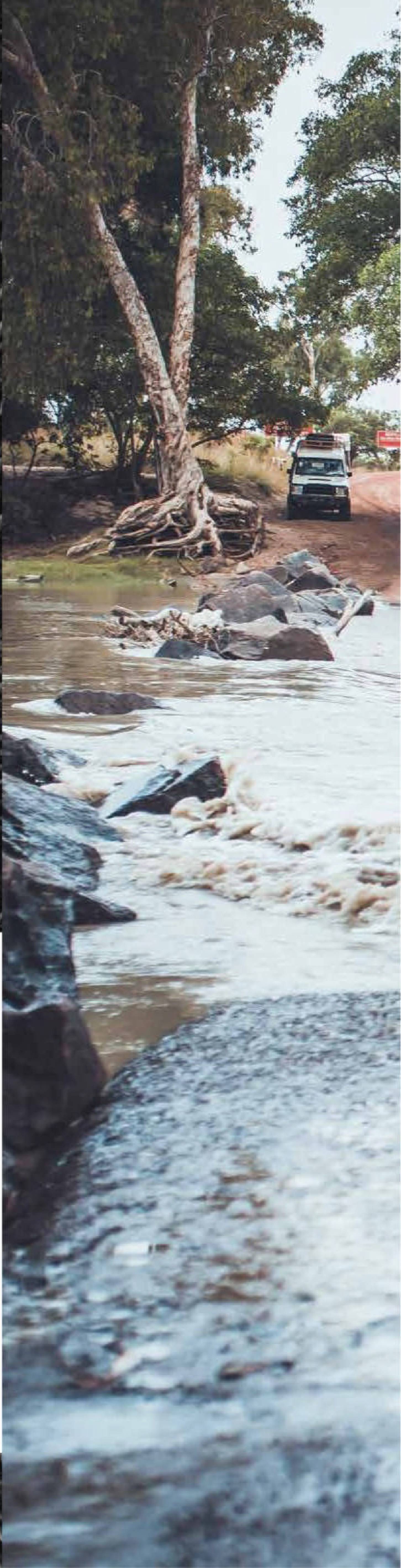
Call us today 07 3277 1008
sales@amve4x4.com.au
**www.amve.com.au**
21 Wolston Road, Sumner QLD 4074

# CROCS CROSSING

BY DICK EUSSEN

**THE WESTERN GATEWAY TO THE NT'S ARNHEM LAND IS RATED THE MOST DANGEROUS CAUSEWAY IN THE COUNTRY, SO READ ON AND TAKE NOTE OR BE SWEPT AWAY TO THE MERCY OF THE RESIDENT CROCS**

RATED as the most dangerous crossing in Australia, Cahills Crossing is named after pioneer settler Paddy Cahill who was known as the "Buffalo Bill" of Australia due to his prowess as a buffalo shooter. While the original 'Cahills Crossing' is a couple of kilometres upstream in the freshwater reach of the river, the existing causeway was named after him when it was constructed in 1956 – and while some sources claim it's the original, it's not.



INDICATES DEEPEST POINT
m
2
1.8
1.6
1.4
1.2

KAKADU
NATIONAL
PARK

The brilliant Kakadu National Park showcases some of the best of Arnhem Land.

## RIVER ADVENTURES

I first saw the crossing in the early 1960s during a fishing and hunting trip to the Alligator Rivers Region, as the area was then known by. It became the Kakadu National Park in 1979. In May 1975, my wife Eileen and I drove into Darwin in our Series 3 Land Rover tray-back to find a city in despair and broken from its disastrous bout with Cyclone Tracy on Christmas Eve, 1974. We had permits for Mount Borradaile and Malay Bay. It was the first time I drove over Cahills Crossing and into forbidden Arnhem Land, the beginning of a grand adventure and love affair that has endured.

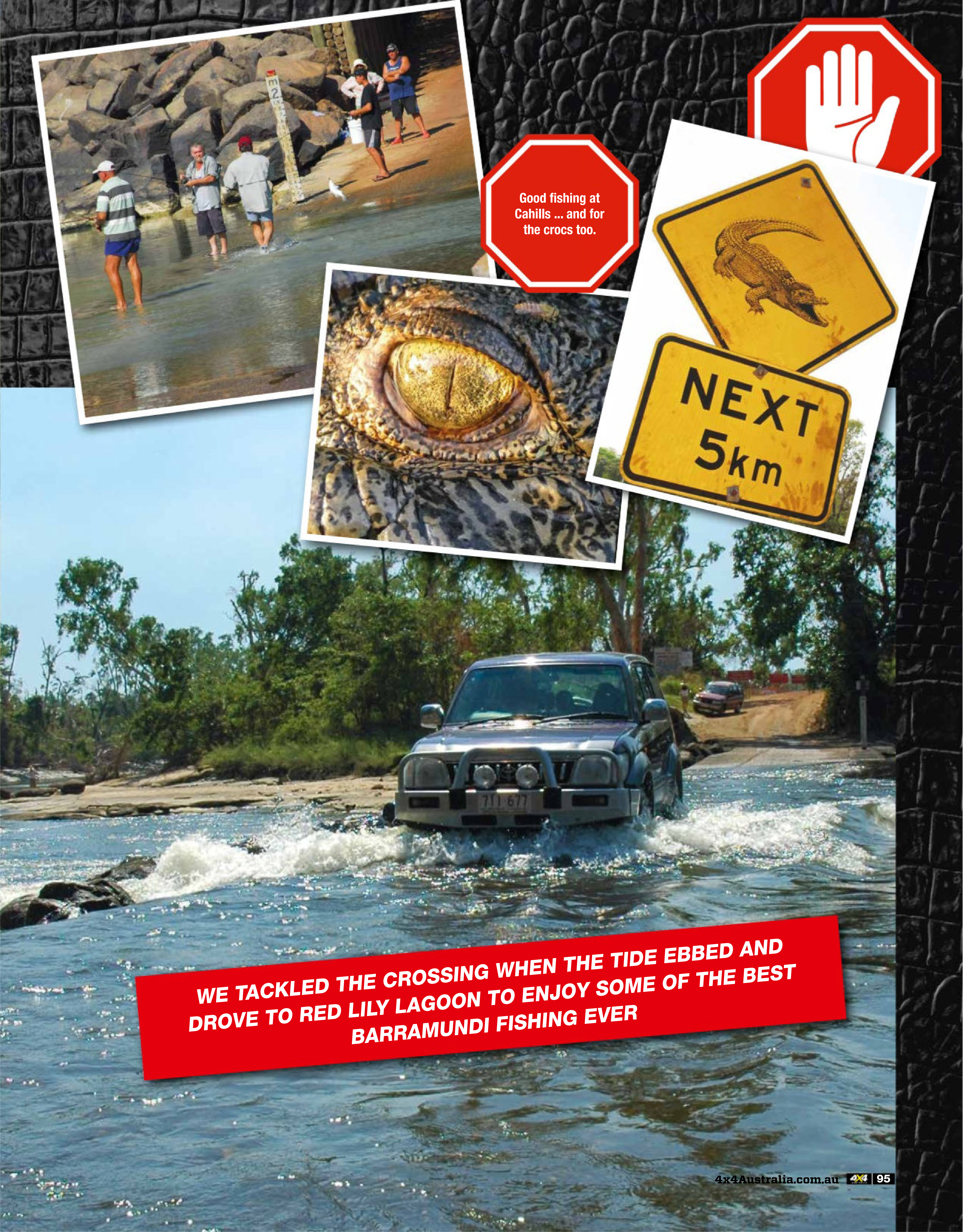
Arnhem Land is different to other parts of Australia as there is something primeval, mystic and uplifting in the monsoon woodlands, the stone country of the Arnhem Land Escarpment, the rivers and beaches, that is unmatched anywhere else.

On the return, we fished and caught barramundi while standing knee-deep in the tidal waters on Cahills Crossing. It was déjà vu for three years in a row before we moved to the new town of Jabiru in 1979. In those days, the road from the Arnhem Highway junction was unsealed and badly corrugated.

A day before May Day 1976, the Magela Creek was high enough for the run-off water to sweep over the Land Rover's bonnet in the deeper sections, but there was little flow in the creek or in the 500m S-bends melaleuca swamp and Hady's Flats beyond. The water was clear, and the hard dirt road was easy to follow. It's now sealed. At the time, the Border Store had a liquor licence, and it was our first port of call. Locals from across the river had already swum or waded across and had drunk the store almost dry. The proprietor was surprised to see us and must have made a few phone calls.

We were the first vehicle in for the season, but by evening there were dozens and others kept coming in during the night, including more grog supplies for the store. The word was out in Darwin: "Cahills Crossing is open." Camping space was tight but, being first, we picked the spot where the viewing platform is now located.

At daylight, we tackled the crossing when the tide ebbed and drove to Red Lily Lagoon to enjoy some of the best barramundi fishing ever. We returned the following year. The fishing was excellent, but due to a couple of late 'knock-em-down' storms, the river was running high and uncrossable. But the locals still managed to wade the slippery causeway back and forth in chain-link fashion, carrying money across and cartons of beer back to thirsty mates.



Good fishing at Cahills ... and for the crocs too.

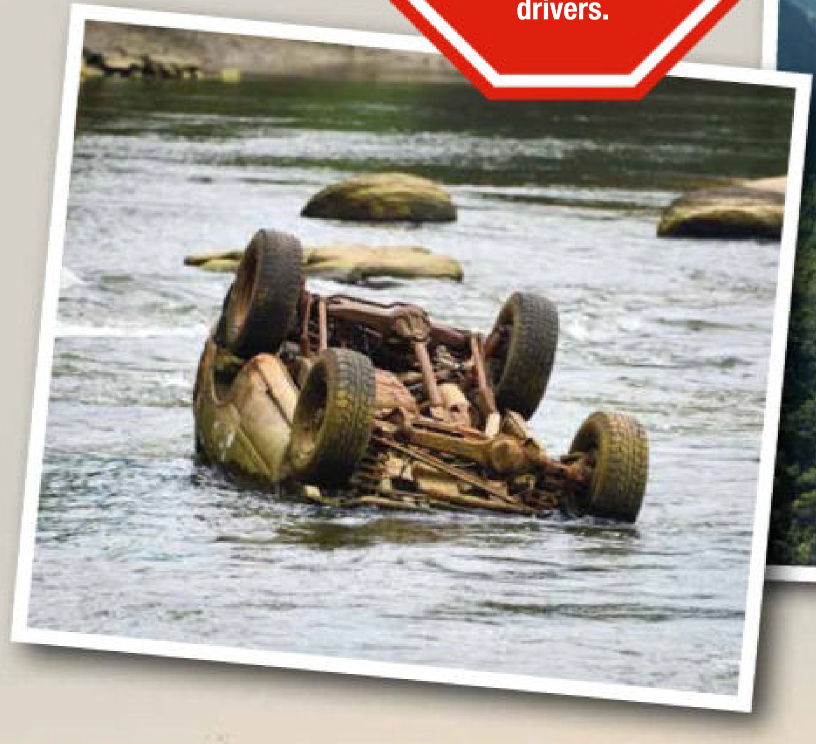
**WE TACKLED THE CROSSING WHEN THE TIDE EBBED AND DROVE TO RED LILY LAGOON TO ENJOY SOME OF THE BEST BARRAMUNDI FISHING EVER**

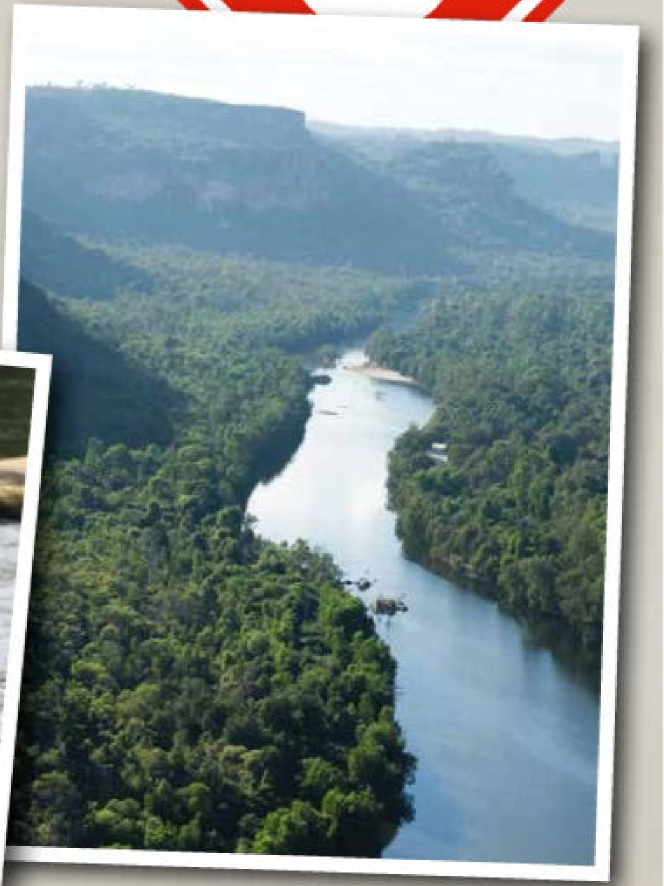
## DANGER TIMES

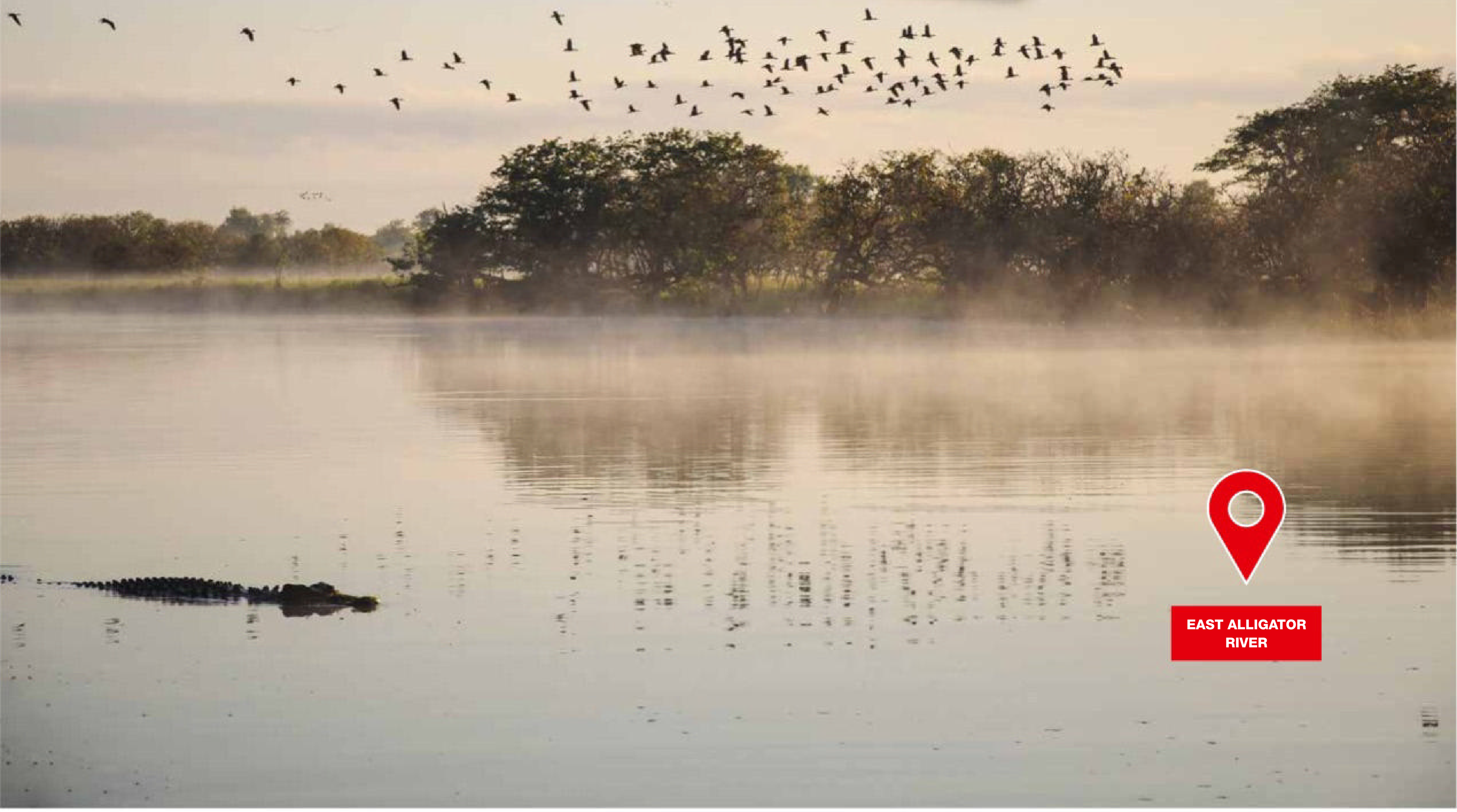
DURING our time at Jabiru we made the East Alligator River home but rarely fished from the causeway, preferring the comfort of my solid Savage Jabiru 3.7m tinnie powered by a 25hp outboard. With it, I explored the upper and lower region of the river, often alone, and I became acutely aware just how many large crocodiles lived in it. The probable explanation was that the presence of so many people about the crossing kept them away from it, while warning rifle and shotgun shots were not uncommon when one did appear, nor was the odd floater …

In the meantime, the locals, boosted by government money and royalties from the two uranium mines, Ranger and Nabarlek, were buying cars and 4WDs. They were coming to grief on the crossing, having no idea how to tackle the high water, and judging by the continual annual mishaps, they still don't …

**Despite its notoriety, Cahills Crossing continues to claim unwary or flippant drivers.**







EAST ALLIGATOR RIVER

AUSSIE
DESERT COOLER
HIGH PERFORMANCE RADIATORS
www.4x4solutions.com.au
GU4X4

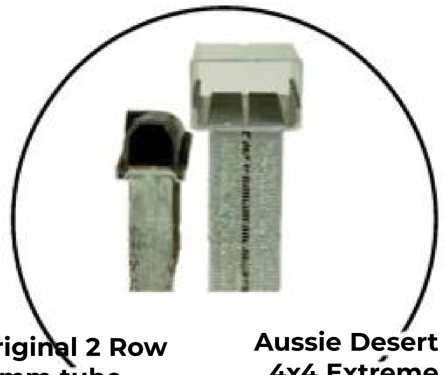
# EXTREME 4X4 RADIATORS FOR EXTREME COOLING

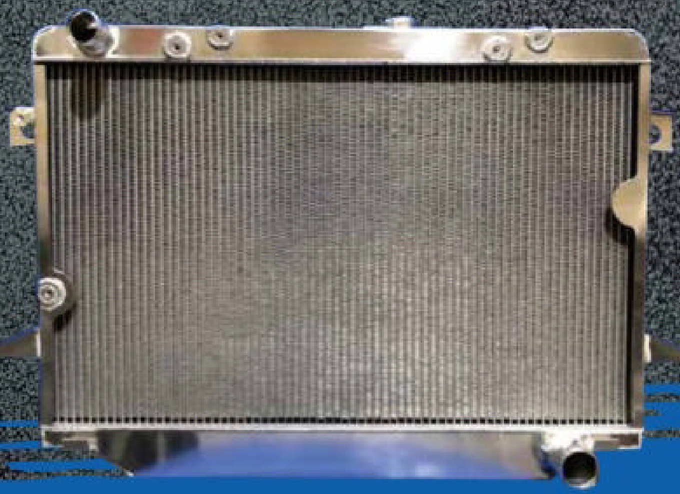
www.aussiedesertcooler.com.au
**www.aussiedesertcooler.shop**
hq@aussiedesertcooler.com.au
We have moved to: 351 Settlement
Road, Thomastown, VIC 3074

**03 9465 8806**

**SHOP NOW!**

- Complete range of Landcruiser and Patrol radiators.
- We specialise in extreme duty radiators available for all 4x4.
- Designed for heavy duty applications - Towing, Off Road and after market Turbo applications.
- Made in Australia for Australian road and climate conditions.
- We freight Australia wide and all goods are insured during transit.


Original 2 Row
10mm tube
Plastic Tank
Aussie Desert
4x4 Extreme
2 Row 26mm tube
Tig welded tanks



AUSTRALIAN MADE
PERFORMANCE PRODUCTS

## LIFE SAVERS

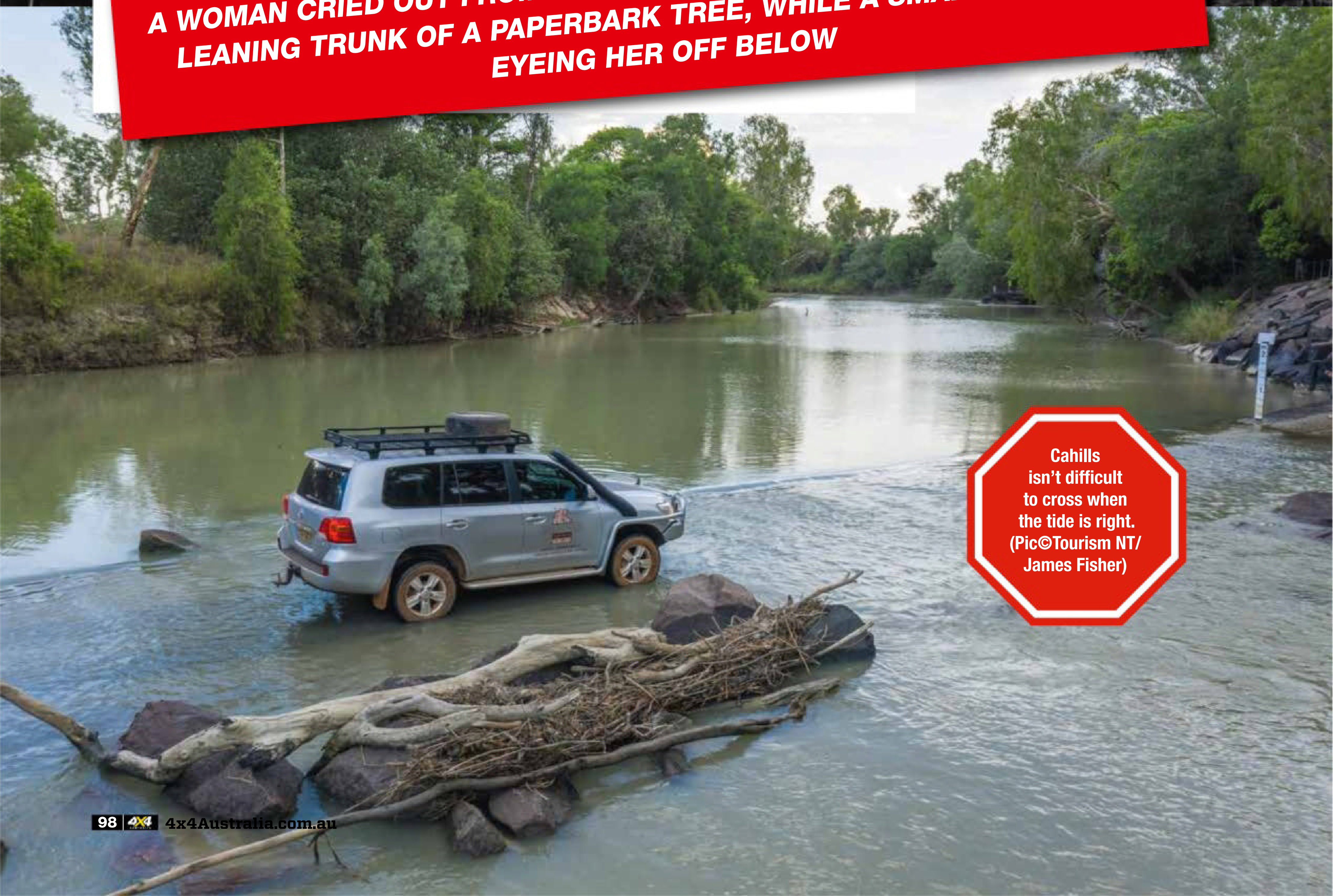
OLD mate and I were coming back from a trip 50km downriver and had just crossed the rock bar some 2km downstream from the crossing when we noted beer cans and an esky bobbing in the current. We scooped most of them out with a landing net – free beer!

There was more stuff floating downstream, before it hit us – someone had turned a boat over. I twisted the throttle, sped up and saw a large local sitting on a wheel below the crossing, the only part exposed from his 4WD. A woman cried out from a tree near us. She was sitting on the leaning trunk of a paperbark tree, while a small croc was eyeing her off below. I steadied the boat under the trunk and old mate lifted her into the boat. She immediately claimed the beer cans as her own … bugga!

We picked up two men from the muddy bank, before we turned our attention to the bloke on the tyre, but someone had pushed a tinnie into the river and was helping him into it. Nothing to do but take photos. Turned out that he had picked up a brand new Nissan Patrol in Darwin that day, one of those early box-like models that were called ‘bog machines’.

On a recent visit, there were three vehicles in the river and another two that hbeen pulled out with a loader on the bank of the Arnhem Land side. One year, a dump truck with two trailers went over the side. The driver thought he was okay with the heavy truck and trailers, but the river was high, unkind and punished him for his ignorance and lack of respect.

A WOMAN CRIED OUT FROM A TREE NEAR US. SHE WAS SITTING ON THE LEANING TRUNK OF A PAPERBARK TREE, WHILE A SMALL CROC WAS EYEING HER OFF BELOW



Cahills isn’t difficult to cross when the tide is right. (Pic©Tourism NT/ James Fisher)

# SIZE DOES MATTER!

Bigger & better! Our new 13-inch clutch upgrade for VDJ Landcruiser Series provides;

- ✓ More torque capacity
- ✓ Endurance & durability
- ✓ Gives you the confidence to take on the toughest off-road tracks

**FREE GIFT** with any online purchase*

Use code: **FREEBIE**

STOCK ARRIVING JANUARY 2023

Performance NPC Clutches

**CONTACT US TODAY TO FIND OUT MORE**

- info@npcperformance.com.au
- Ph: 07 3420 3446
- 75 Secam Street, Mansfield Qld 4122
- www.npcperformance.com.au

*Enter code 'FREEBIE' at checkout. While stocks last. Free gift is an NPC hat or t-shirt. One size fits all. Ts & Cs apply.

---

# Need Air? Inflate a flat tyre in 55 seconds!

**Endless compressed air up to 120 psi, at a massive 10 cuft/min, is now available from the engine in your 4x4, tractor, truck, boat, or trades ute.**

**Work anywhere your petrol, diesel or LPG engine does!**

- Belt driven from your engine using proven auto air conditioner technology
- Extremely strong, versatile, and cost effective
- Designed to run from fan belt (clutch operated from dash)
- No power loss or increased fuel consumption when not in use
- Draws minimal power when operating
- Pump up a flat car tyre in 25 seconds
- Fill 4x4 tyre in 55 seconds
- Top up your tyres after sand driving in just 25 seconds.
- Bracket kits available for most 4WD's

"The **Endless Air™ compressor** is arguably the most discussed and copied compressor on the market, making it an ideal inclusion for our test. Fast compact and simple to install, this compressor is the ultimate in on-board air systems". — *2014 industry test*

Our compressor not only came out of this rigourous test as recommended, but the

***FASTEST!***

**Use your Endless Air™ to run air operated diff-locks, air tools, spray guns, impact wrenches, inflatable boats, nail guns or air beds!**

Endless Air

from **$550** inc gst

**www.endlessair.com.au**

Call now for further information or brochure Ph (03) 9584 4785

Kareela Engineering 2 Tamar Court, Mentone VIC 3194 email: john.endlessair@gmail.com

## CROCODILES

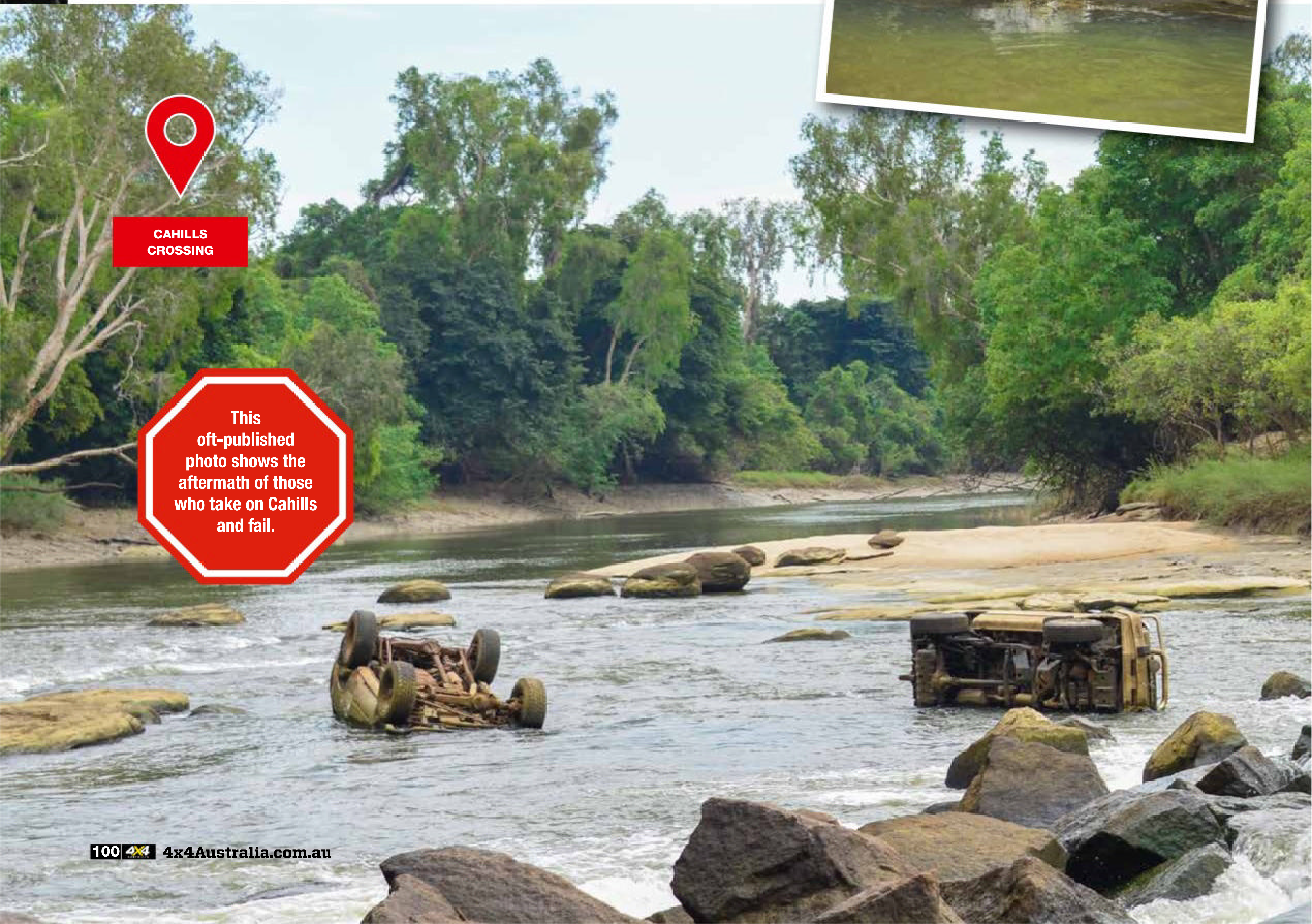
BEFORE the 1980s, there were few crocodiles about the crossing, but in May 1987, old mate, Kerry McLoughlin, was fishing the run-off, the period after the Wet when the plains and rivers drain and the barramundi come on the bite.

There were other people fishing on the causeway as the road had just opened. Kerry waded across and had a few casts on the Arnhem Land side before returning, the water knee-deep and running strongly. Upstream, the head of a big crocodile surfaced alongside him. Those who saw it yelled warnings, but the current noise was too strong – the cries went unheard.

Suddenly Kerry saw the croc and ran forward, the high water and current hindering his progress. He fell and slipped off the crossing and swam to the high muddy bank where willing hands were reaching down to help him up, but to no avail as the living nightmare of the tropics leaped up, grabbed him about the head and shoulders and performed the dreaded death roll below the horrified witnesses. There have been more attacks, and due to the nature of stupid people, others will become victims.

Today, there are more than 120 crocodiles within 2km of the crossing. Twice a day the tide (up to 8m) pushes up from the Van Diemen Gulf, 100km downstream, to a few kilometres upstream from Cahills. When currents collide with the crossing, it creates powerful and dangerous conditions and drivers, mostly locals, end up in the water when vehicles are washed off it. As far as I know there have been no serious attacks on people in the water, even though they swim for their lives in the deeper sections – some clutching desperately on to their children.

Come on in ... we're a bit hungry 'ey.



This oft-published photo shows the aftermath of those who take on Cahills and fail.

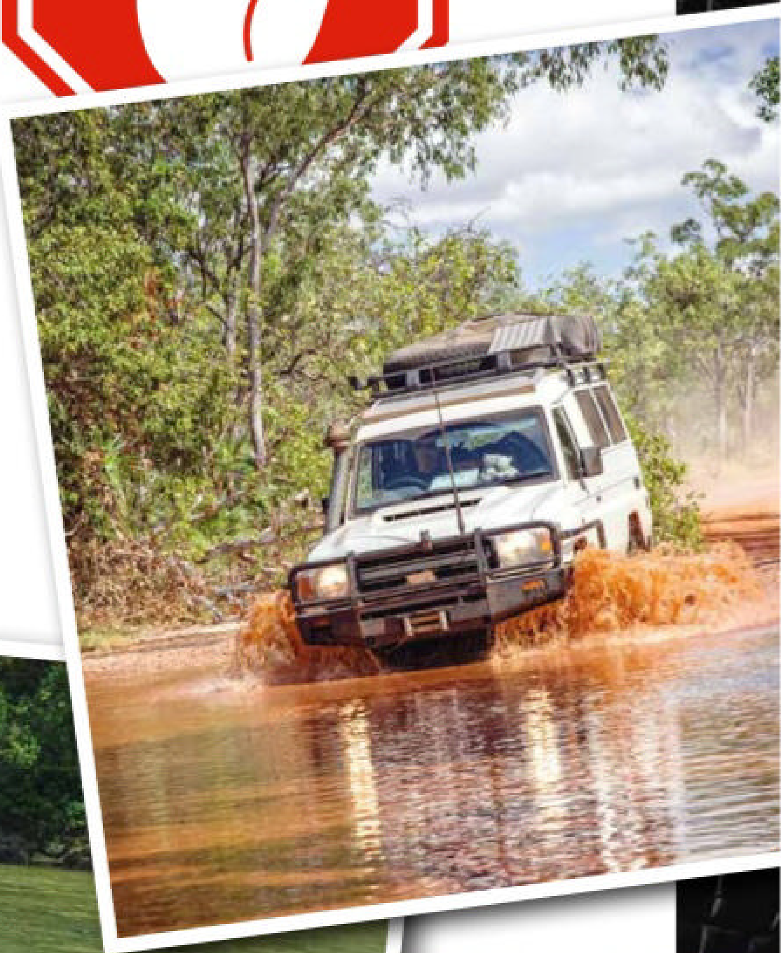
## SAFE CROSSING

THE incoming tide at Cahills is six hours behind Darwin's tidal times, and knowledgeable drivers use it to their advantage. The most dangerous period is during the run-off season when huge volumes of run-off floodwaters rush over the causeway, but some drivers insist on challenging the river – and losing.

Having driven to Arnhem Land and back many times, I have found that the best time to cross during the run-off season is when both the incoming tide and river peak when, for a few minutes, there is no current before the tide turns and the fun begins. Water depth is generally below 80cm and easy to cross. But once the water speed picks up, forget about it or end up as lunch for the hungry crocodiles who wait with open mouths for fish to swim downriver.

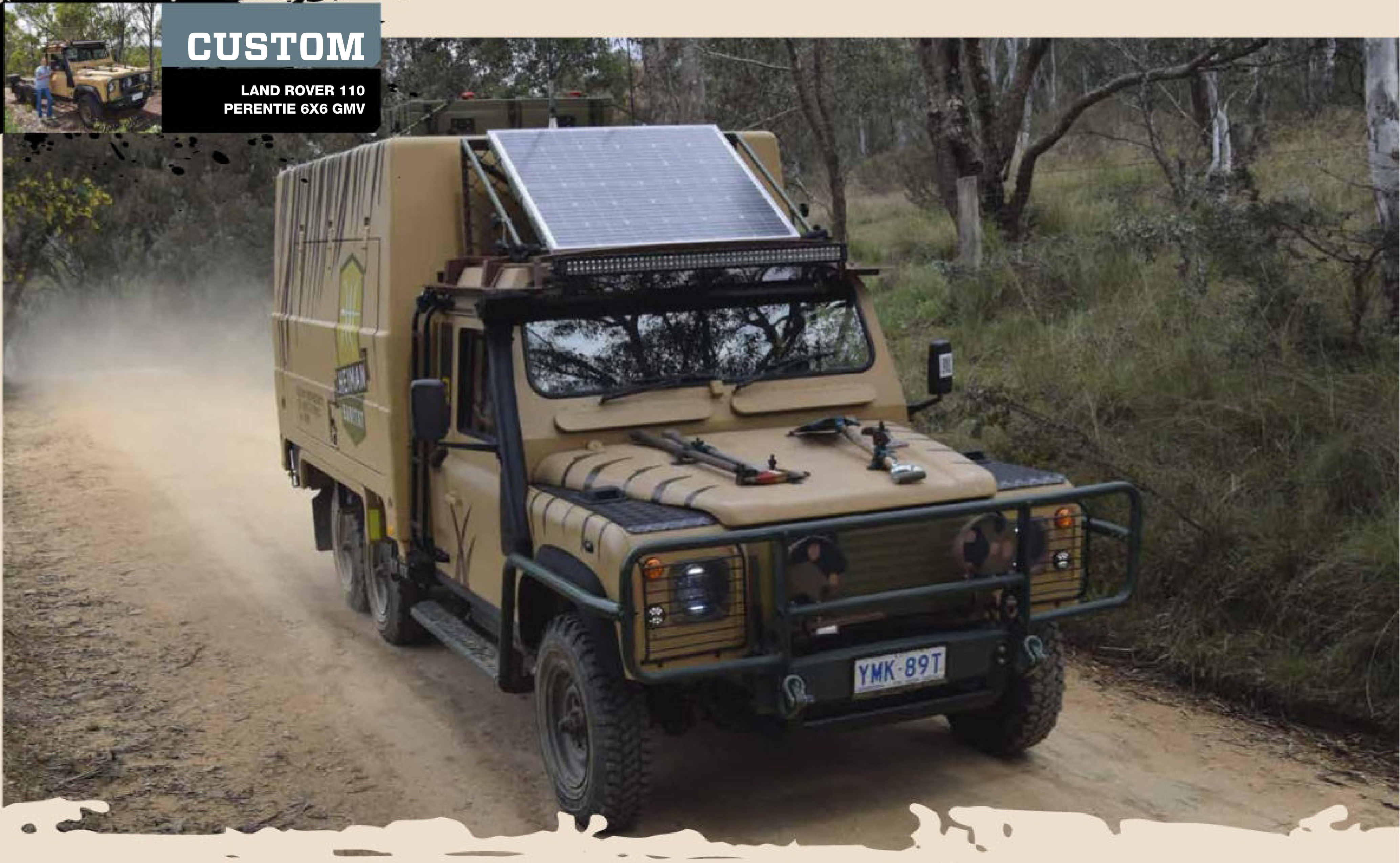
Make no mistake, the crossing is only possible on the ebb tide in the run-off and during the dry season when there is little freshwater flow in the river. Hungry crocodiles are ever present, waiting for the tide to push fish in on the upstream side, before switching over to the downstream side when the tide turns. It's truly an amazing spectacle that is unmatched anywhere else in the country, perhaps the globe. Check out the film clips on YouTube, especially the one that shows a drunk woman challenging a croc with a thong.

Adventure awaits in Arnhem Land – if you survive Cahills Crossing



INDICAT
DEEP S
PO
2
1.8
1.6
1.4
1.2
1

When tide and river flow peak, Cahills is considered safe to cross.



# COLD WAR COMFORTS

## AN EX-MILITARY LAND ROVER 110 PERENTIE 6X6 TAKES LEAVE OF SERVICE AND JOINS THE TOURING RANKS

WORDS KATH HEIMAN

PURCHASING an ex-Australian military 6x6 Land Rover 110 Perentie in 2018 went from an idea to reality in the space of around four months. For several years, we'd been watching Australian Frontline Machinery's series of ex-military auctions. Every month, an eclectic mix of gear cropped up inviting bids. Included among these were the 4x4 and 6x6 variants of the ADF's fleet of superseded Land Rover 110 Perenties.

More than half of the 4079 Land Rover Perenties ever produced had already been sold through online auctions since we'd been watching. While bidders routinely went gangbusters to secure 4x4 variants including the popular Regional Force Surveillance Vehicles, our sights were set elsewhere.

### (NOT SO) TINY HOME

THE Perentie 6x6's potential as a go-anywhere mobile home was self-evident, whichever way you looked at it. The cargo version has an aluminium rear tray area covering a vast 6.55m² under the cover of a canvas canopy on a hoop frame, with drop sides and a tailgate. For a basic camper set-up, it takes little more than a custom slide kitchen, fridge, gas bottle, water tank, some swags, and the job is done. But then there are the ambulance and general maintenance vehicle (GMV)

**SPEEDY?** The 6T Light Rigid rig likes to cruise at 80km/h.

variants. And it didn't take much imagination to envisage the insulated fibreglass rear modular section being modified to become a full-blown all-weather camper.

Clearly, either of these modules were spacious enough to use for long-term living. They are, after all, big units. At a whopping 3m long, 2m high and 2.4m wide, the 'canopy' is big enough to hide a Suzuki Jimny! It's wide because, even though it's based on a 110 Land Rover, the 6x6 variant is set on a chassis that is 200mm wider than a standard 110.

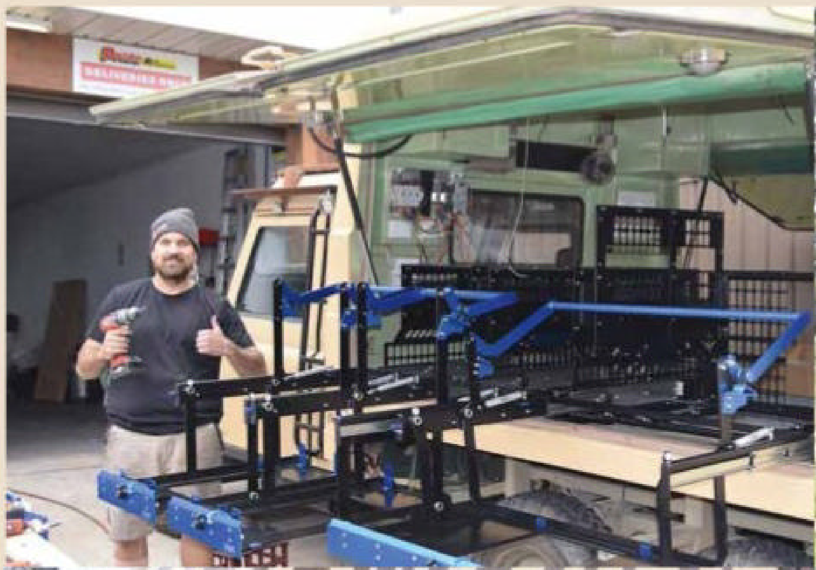
Happily, the wider cabin fits three seats abreast; a situation that makes it perfect for our family trio. The GMV was particularly appealing because the rear 'ambulance style' door is supplemented by lift-up side doors (gull-wings) that are purpose-designed to stay open during rain events. This set-up looked particularly suitable for camper modification; offering better ventilation than the ambulance variant, as well as options to extend the floor plan beyond the width of the vehicle. Exactly how to turn this cavernous space into a home away from home, however, was a challenge that would evidently take some time (and money) to resolve.

## HOME GUARD HERO

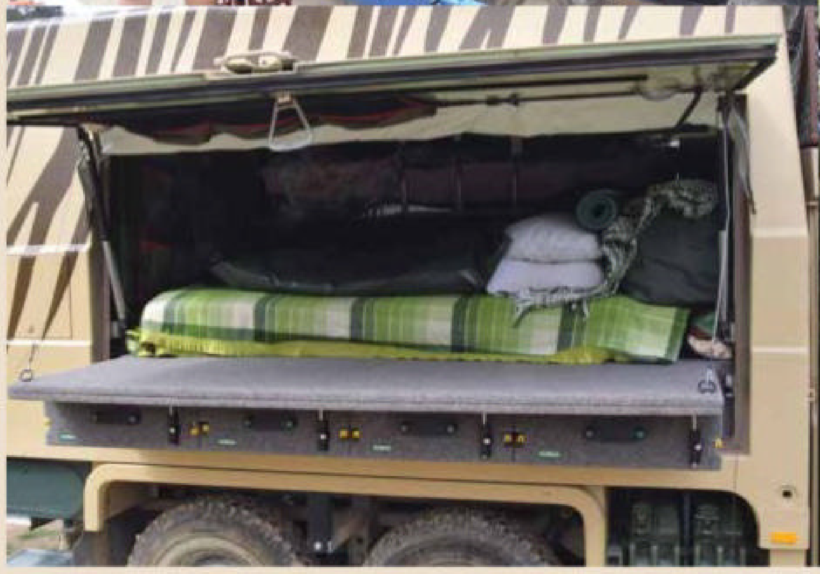
ULTIMATELY, we made a successful bid on a 1989 6x6 Perentie Cargo variant with a mere 21,000km on the odometer. The logbook told it all. Having spent the first 14 years of its life in war stocks, it was pulled out of storage in 2003 with just a few hundred kilometres on the clock. In these languid years it was treated to all the modifications and upgrades the rest of the fleet enjoyed. These even included re-dipping the galvanised chassis and having the centre diff replaced at 19,000km, regardless that the logbook made no reference to the work actually being required. Perhaps it was just a case of the vehicle being given to the apprentice to work on. Regardless, it was then assigned to the Joint Logistics Unit (the loan pool) where it spent a couple of years intermittently supporting military exercises.

A couple of months after buying the Land Rover, we purchased a GMV canopy module separately. By having the module unconnected to the vehicle, we could readily access all component elements of both – and this would assist when it came to rewiring the 12/24/240/415V loom and preparing the module for its 12V camper conversion. Further, as a Cargo variant, we knew our Perentie had spent its military life carrying out relatively undemanding tasks like moving stores between military sites (largely on tarmac roads) or delivering camp kitchen meals to soldiers in the field.

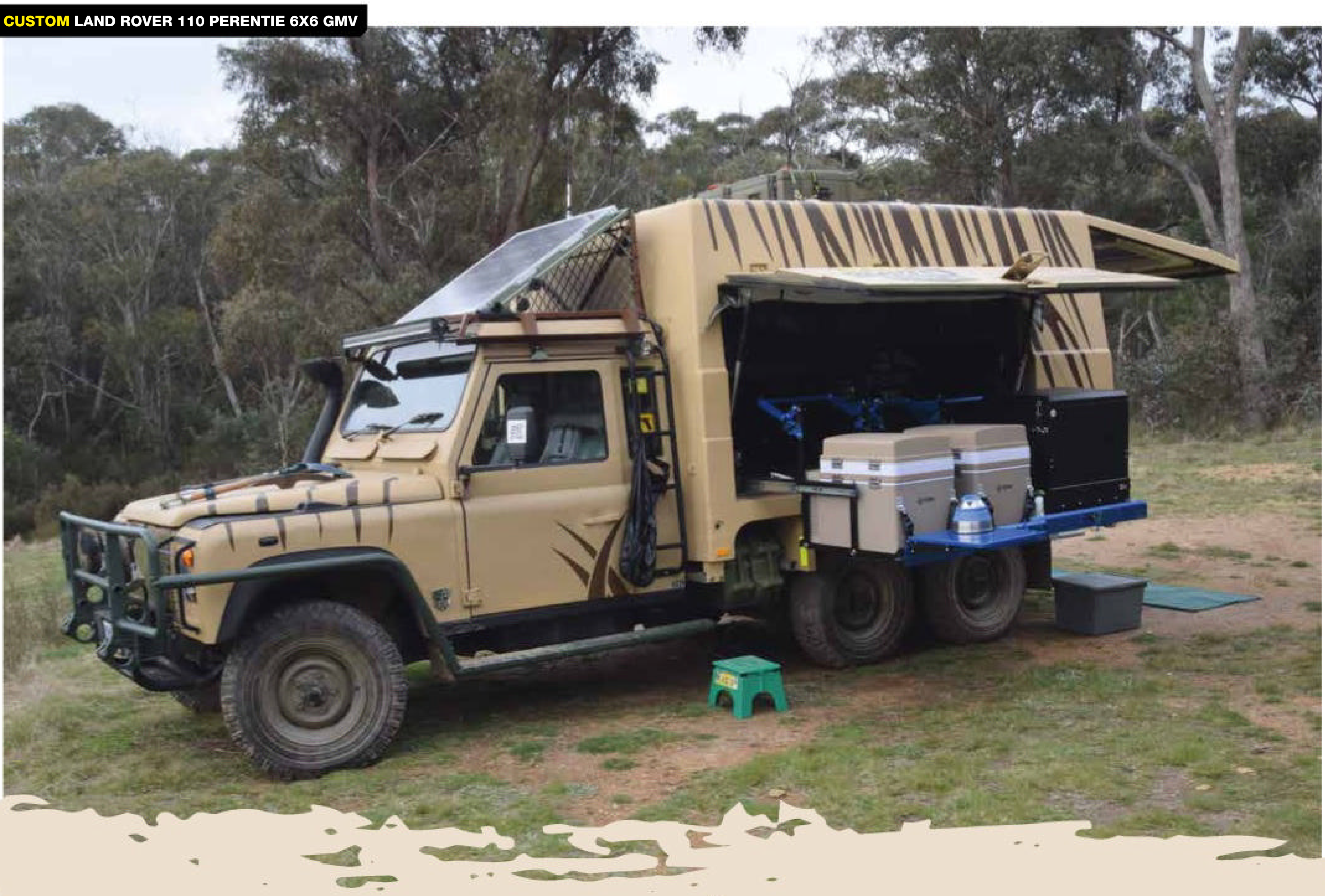
By contrast, Perenties that saw service as GMVs were much more likely to have seen hard military service and overloaded. And we didn't need the added expenditure for new suspension, bushes, axles and the like. While there was evidently minor damage to the module, the cost of bringing it back to spec was likely to be far less than dealing with mechanical issues.



**TAKES THREE** Tracks Adventure Gear installed the solar and three MSA drop slides.



**TRICK GEAR** ORS created the four-drawer drop-down lounge-bed combo.



## WHILE IT LED A SHELTERED EXISTENCE IN ITS EARLY YEARS, WE INTEND TO PUT IT THROUGH ITS PACES ON REMOTE OUTBACK TRACKS

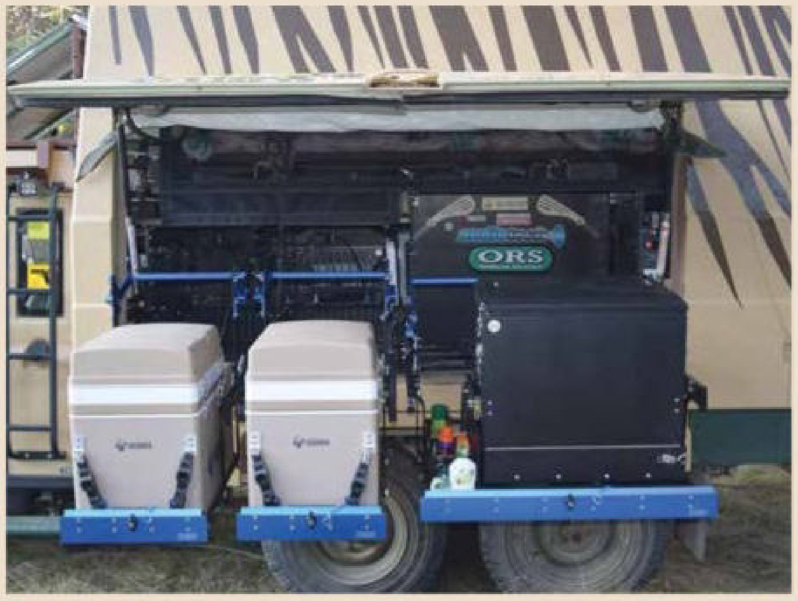
### TOUGH TRUCK

THE rugged credentials of this 6x6 war horse are obvious from its specs. For starters, its two-tonne payload makes a big impression. With an unladen weight of 3660kg it has a GVM 5660kg with an original towing capacity of 1500kg. To give it grunt, the diesel Isuzu 4BD1 3.9-litre four-cylinder engine is turbo-charged with a Garrett model ATD-T25. The integral diff in the transfer case permanently drives the front and intermediate axles: so that's a 6x4 for daily operation. For difficult terrain, the diff can be manually locked, automatically engaging the rear axle too, which makes it a true 6x6 when needed.

While our rig led a sheltered existence in its early years, we intend to put it through its paces on some of Australia's most remote outback tracks – conditions it was designed for in defence of the nation. So, the key focus of the conversion has always been on completing the camper component, while ensuring the vehicle itself is mechanically, electrically and structurally sound. Notwithstanding that our Perentie has remarkably few kilometres under its belt, it's still seen some field time. Importantly, it's spent a lot of its life sitting in a vehicle-yard doing very little interspersed with hard times on exercise where soldiers treat vehicles like they stole them. So, we've spent considerable time building relationships with trusted mechanics, electricians, steel fabricators and mechanical engineers to ensure our 6x6 Cold War veteran is still fighting fit.

All 6x6 Perenties come with a dual jerry can holder on the driver's side. When we found a second holder, we installed it where the 24V battery box used to sit on the passenger side. With these four jerries, combined with the twin 62-litre fuel tanks, we'll have a total capacity of 204 litres of diesel. That should get us more than 1100km at 18L/100km, which isn't bad going for a 30-year-old truck with a kerb weight that's now more than three times that of Hilux dual-cabs.

**TOO EASY** Setting up is now a cinch.



**THE GALLEY** Two Bushman fridge/ freezers and Top End Longhaul kitchen.

TRUFIT 3D

HEAVY DUTY
3D MAXTRAC
SERIES

CATCH ALL THE DIRT IN THE MAT, NOT YOUR CAR!
100% WATERPROOF & PRESSURE WASHABLE,
AVAILABLE IN RUBBER OR CARPET.

TRUFIT 3D MATS ARE FULLY
MOULDED TO SUIT EACH
VEHICLE. AVAILABLE
FOR A LARGE RANGE OF
CARS, SUV'S AND 4WD'S.

1 / 6 AIRLIE AVE, DANDENONG,
VIC 3175 PH 03 9792 2333
INFO@TRUFITCARPETS.COM.AU

VISION AUTO PTY/LTD

WWW.TRUFITCARPETS.COM.AU

## CASH CONVERSION

TO support the vehicle now and into the future, we've acquired spares at auction that have been simply too cheap to ignore – or that are bespoke to the rig. These have included wheel rims, spare doors, brake booster assembly and a fuel pump. We've also focused on acquiring spare axles. In addition to having a wider wheelbase than any other 4x4 Land Rover, the 6x6's three axles all have a different configuration to cater for the PTO on the transfer case that drives the third axle via a vacuum clutch – and the extra off-centre prop shaft. So, we've purchased two of each (second-hand) to provide us with the option to rebuild a broken axle or to furnish parts should we require them. We have also added a military LT95A gearbox to our spares supply so that we're not left trying to modify a civilian LT95 sometime down the track. Lucky for us, we have an old mate with a woolshed on his property the size of a supermarket to stash these spares away.

For the fit-out, we've relied on a combination of off-the-shelf purchases and repurposed military kit. A couple of trips to the UK to visit aging parents proved quite fruitful in this regard, returning home with odd-shaped excess baggage bursting with Land Rover accessories that raised some quizzical looks from airport check-in staff. But it's amazing how quickly you get moved along when you begin explaining to harried airport attendants that the surfboard sized package you're trying to check-in contains ladders, bonnet protectors and air intakes for a Land Rover. Their glazed eyes say it all: "Just make them go away".

Beyond the new gear, the rig's military origins are reflected in the six ex-military 'Pelican' cases used for storing clothes and other supplies. And to keep our daughter comfy at night, there's a Korean War vintage military ambulance stretcher with a custom 75mm mattress, as a loft bed accessed via a handful of indoor rock-wall climbing holds.

While these aftermarket parts are integral to the camper conversion, much of the refit has involved custom fabrication that's required a lot attention by skilled tradies. On the outside, the whole rig has been coated with 'Speedliner'. This is a ute liner that's 500 times stronger than its nearest competitor, so it will protect the vehicle's outer surfaces against unnecessary wear and tear, with the added benefit of reinforcing the module's 30-year-old fibreglass monocoque body. Besides, it's not in the army anymore so it doesn't have to look like it is. To cater for life on the road, inside there are three MSA fridge drop-slides carrying two Bushman fridges and a Top End Campgear Longhaul kitchen combined with an Ecoheat Induction cooktop, sockets, lights – the whole box and dice. All this is powered by three 12V Direct slimline 100Ah lithium batteries, a Redarc Classic BCDC 1240D charger and Redarc 2000W inverter, and 400W of Redarc fixed solar panels with an additional input for a Redarc 190W SunPower solar blanket.

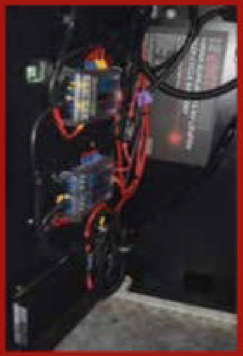
Custom cabinetry from ORS includes a four-drawer system that ingeniously supports a double bed when the internal lounge is folded down, a merbau work desk, electronics cabinet, storage racks, and even a rock-climbing wall. There are also tie-down points to secure items we pick up while on the road, like boxes of wine and more Land Rover parts.

## MAJOR MODS

### BODYWORK

Speedliner ute-tray liner respray for cab and module; Safari Snorkel (for a 1989 LR County); Britpart wing air-intake scoops; ARB side-steps; genuine Perentie LRPV brush rails; side-mounted twin Defender rear-door access ladders; custom hinged solar roof rack to track the sun.

### ELECTRICAL



Redarc BCDC 1240D and 2000W inverter and dual-battery gauge; dual-battery system in main cabin; three 12V Direct 100Ah slimline lithium in module; two 200W solar panels; 190W Redarc SunPower folding solar blanket, Red Eye Lighting Twin nine-inch 1800 lumen spotties, 52-inch dual-row spot/flood combo LED bar and three 20W LED work lights; Britpart LED headlight upgrade; Mud Parts USB and 12V dash module.

### COMMS AND NAV

GME XRS Connect Compact UHF CB radio; Sony Apple CarPlay Media Receiver, tucked away in the overhead board; and a HEMA HX-2 Navigator to show us the way.

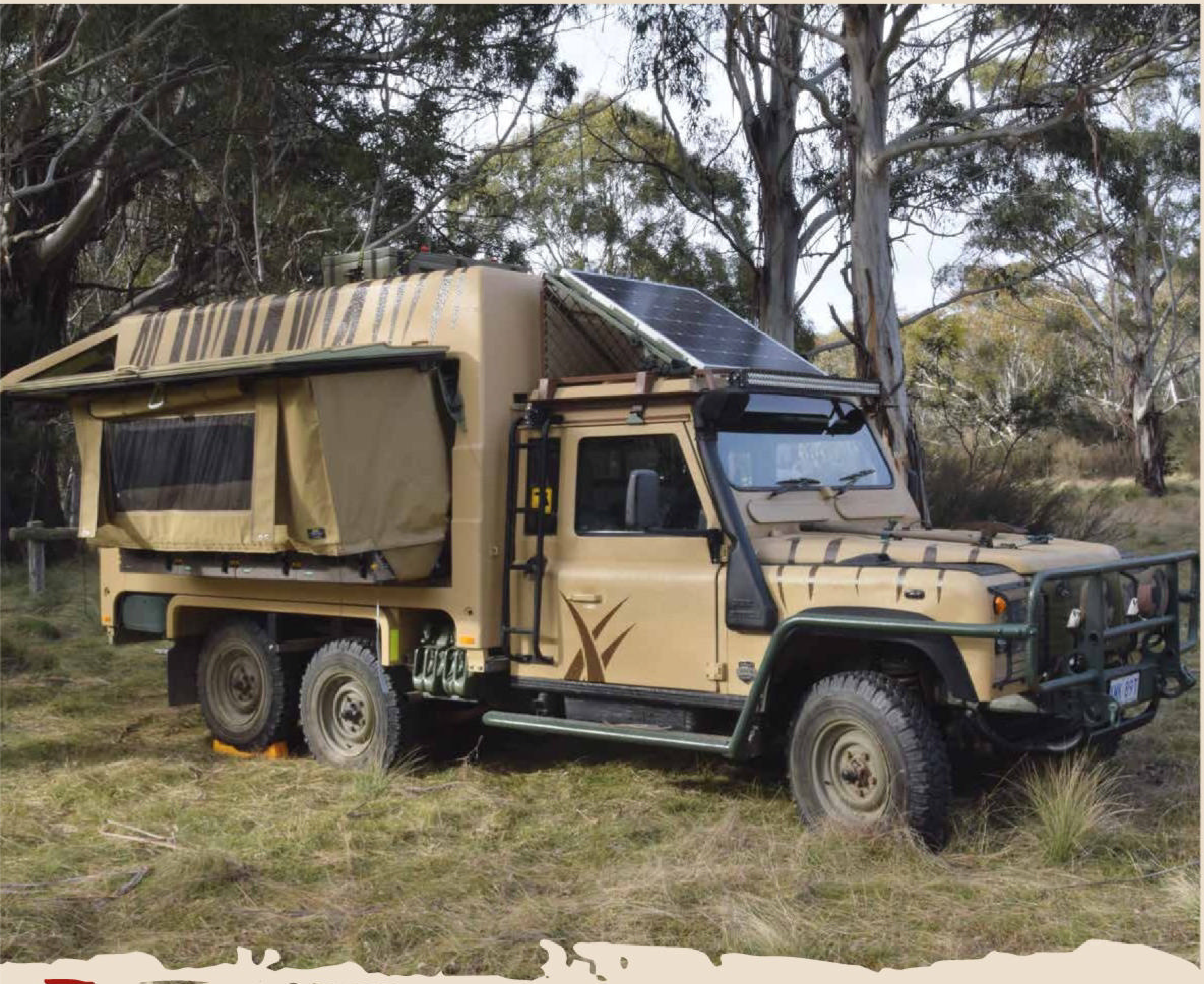
### COMFORTS

Dynamat Xtreme heat and sound deadener in the cabin; HeatSheet heat and sound deadener under the bonnet; ORS custom storage solution; three MSA fridge slides and cages; Top End Campgear Longhaul kitchen; twin Bushman 35/52L fridge/freezers; Korean War vintage medical stretcher with custom 75mm single memory-foam mattress; custom 75mm double memory foam mattress; JB Canvas custom drop-down sleeping annex and awning walls. And a Bushranger hot-water shower under the bonnet.

## BEAUTIFUL BEAST

FIVE years on and the camper conversion is ready to hit the back tracks. Ultimately, the shopping list for this custom refit proved to be eye-wateringly long – and like every build, further tweaks will be inevitable once we've spent some serious time on the road getting to know each other. But the result is absolutely magnificent, and totally unique. With only 185 GMVs ever made, ours is like no other.

I'm sure we own the best 6x6 Perentie camper conversion in the world. And the time to prove it is coming soon with Land Rover's 75th Anniversary celebrations and showcase at Cooma, over the 2023 Easter weekend. We'll be taking our Bug-Out-Vehicle. Will we see you there?



**DREAM TIME**
Pop-out double bed with a view.

# PROJECT PERENTIE

COMBINING components of a Land Rover 110 with an Australian-made chassis and bespoke parts strong enough to handle the toughest conditions, the Perentie answered the ADF's need for a replacement fleet of light trucks. So, why Perentie? The Perentie (Varanus giganteus) is Australia's largest lizard species and is reputed to be 'strong, fast and uniquely designed for its environment', all characteristics the Army wanted in its new fleet. Having named the 1981 procurement 'Project Perentie', the Perentie name fell into common Army usage.

Produced for the ADF by Jaguar Land Rover Australia between May 1986 and Sep 1992, and by BAeA under licence between 1996-98, the Perentie came in both 4x4 and 6x6 models. The 6x6 were made in eight variants, with three equipped with fully enclosed fibreglass rear bodies: the GMVs, ambulance and Electronic Repair Vehicles (ERVs). The fibreglass moulds for these were produced in Australia, initially by JAKAB Industries which had made fibreglass bodies for NSW ambulances. Ultimately, only 970 Land Rover 6x6 110 Perenties were ever made. Of these, 231 Cargo variants without winch were produced (like ours) with a further 185 GMVs manufactured. Extra rear bodies were made between 2007-08 to replace damaged modules like ours.

**Attribution: Thanks to REMLR for the vehicle data and Michael Cecil's book* 'Tough Truck! Australian Army Land Rovers 1949-2012' *for insights into the Perentie's history.*

# 4X4 AUSTRALIA AUSTRALIAN MADE PRODUCTS

FLASHLUBE DIESEL CONDITIONER

flashlube.com
DIESEL CONDITIONER
Genuine Flash Lube

FLASHLUBE HIGH TEMP GREASE

flashlube.com
HIGH TEMPERATURE GREASE
Genuine Flash Lube

FLASHLUBE MOLY GREASE

flashlube.com
MOLY GREASE
Genuine Flash Lube

The ORIGINAL AND THE BEST.

maxtrax.hq

maxtraxhq

maxtrax_hq

maxtrax.com.au
MAXTRAX
AUSTRALIAN MADE

FLASHLUBE OIL STABILISER

flashlube.com
HEAVY DUTY OIL STABILISER
Genuine Flash Lube

PROMOTE YOUR AUSTRALIAN MADE PRODUCTS HERE

0410 221 434

Scott Crowley Brand Sales Manager 4x4 Australia
E Scott.Crowley@aremedia.com.au

PROMOTE YOUR AUSTRALIAN MADE PRODUCTS HERE
ASK US HOW

Scott Crowley
Brand Sales Manager 4x4 Australia
E Scott.Crowley@aremedia.com.au
M 0410 221 434

THE AUSTRALIAN AUTOMOTIVE 4X4 MARKET HAS A RICH AND PROUD HERITAGE. FOR YEARS LOCAL DESIGN, INGENUITY AND MANUFACTURING HAS CREATED MANY FANTASTIC FOUR WHEEL DRIVE RELATED PRODUCTS.

AT **4X4 AUSTRALIA** WE ARE PROUD TO SHOWCASE AND SUPPORT TRULY AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERED AND MANUFACTURED PRODUCTS - HERE ARE A FEW AUSSIE MANUFACTURERS KEEPING THE DREAM ALIVE, HELPING TO KEEP THE LOCAL MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY THRIVING AND KEEPING PEOPLE IN REAL JOBS.

**SO SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL AUSSIE MADE PRODUCTS.**

## THIS MONTH WE TALK TO BRAD MCCARTHY FROM
# MAXTRAX

### Describe your business.

We make MAXTRAX, the original 4WD recovery tracks that make recovering a bogged vehicle a safe, simple, quick and easy task, regardless of the user's level of 4WD experience or ability.

### Tell us some of the history of your company.

It was while field-checking routes for a 4WD guidebook to North Queensland & Cape York in 2001 that I got bogged on a remote beach, with the tide coming in, and the path that my life would take changed forever. I was traveling alone, as I often still do, and despite having all of the traditional vehicle recovery gear on board, spent six hours recovering the vehicle with a hand winch. Once it was finally on solid ground, I lay sprawled on the beach, covered in black mangrove mud, sunburned, dehydrated, exhausted and covered in sand-fly bites, and I thought to myself "There's got to be an easier way than that!" When I got home from the trip, I started researching alternative solo recovery equipment, but I couldn't find what I wanted, so I started designing my own. Four years of R&D and numerous prototypes later Australian-made MAXTRAX was launched onto the 4WD world, and instantly won 4WD Monthly Magazine's award for Best New Product under $500. Since then our company has grown from our first year of selling solely on the 4WD show circuit to supplying all of Australia's major outdoor and 4WD retailers, and to distributors and customers all over the world including the Australian, US, and French Militaries; the United Nations, NGO's; mining, energy and exploration companies; government agencies; emergency services departments; lifeguard services, desert racers; 4WD trainers; tour guides and weekend warriors.

### Where is the company at now?

We've grown rapidly over the past few years with the boom, both here and abroad, particularly in the USA, of the 4WD/overlanding market. It also amazes me that we're continually signing up new international distributors who tell us that their customers are constantly asking for MAXTRAX by name.

### What is your product's unique selling point?

MAXTRAX is a proven, trusted and highly effective Australian-made product moulded from high-grade material that is light, strong and tough, and safe, simple and easy to use. I created MAXTRAX not because I wanted to start a 4WD-related business but because I wanted quality product that I could rely on when the chips were down.

### If you could say only two words about your product or service, what would they be?

'Quality' and 'Effective'.

### What makes you different from your competition?

We created the 4WD recovery board category, so the knockoffs have had to compromise their designs to try to avoid infringing our patents. And while our products are made from the highest quality materials available: Australian made, engineering grade, UV-stabilized, reinforced Nylon, that's built to cope with the severe punishment that it frequently receives, the knockoffs use the cheapest stuff they can find and don't seem to care if their products are actually effective or not.

### What products are you developing now?

We've recently released the MAXTRAX Xtreme, with replaceable alloy teeth that was designed with feedback from our military customers.

We're also utilising our own extensive real-world 4WD'ing experience to expand our offering by releasing some exciting new recovery products (which should be on the market by the time this article comes out).

### Who uses your products?

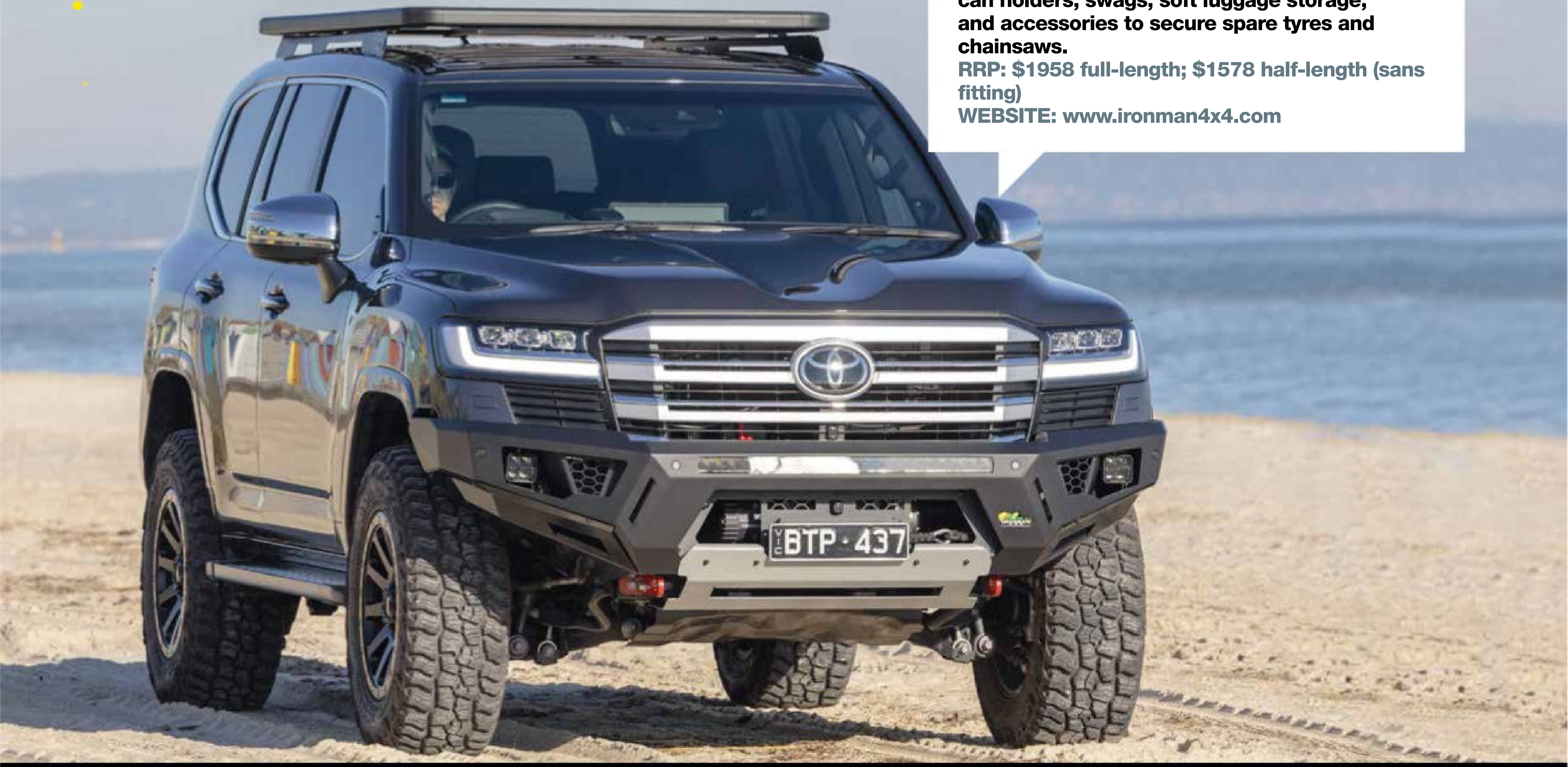
Our customers include the Australian, US, and French Militaries; the United Nations, NGO's; mining, energy and exploration companies; government agencies; emergency services departments; lifeguard services, desert racers; 4WD trainers; tour guides and weekend warriors all around the world.

### What is your greatest achievement?

Creating a successful Australian family company and brand that's now well-known and respected around the world from a simple idea conceived during an extremely stressful day on a remote north Queensland beach.

# GEAR

PRODUCT TESTS & NEW STUFF



## IRONMAN 4X4 300 SERIES LANDCRUISER ATLAS ROOF RACK

**Ironman 4x4's range of accessories for the Toyota LandCruiser 300 Series has expanded and now includes a range of bullbars, recovery points, side-steps and this Atlas roof-rack platform system. The Atlas platform rack system for the LC300 is available in two sizes: full-length, or half-length for those with a factory sunroof. There is also a wide range of accessories designed to work with the Atlas platform including gas bottle and jerry can holders, swags, soft luggage storage, and accessories to secure spare tyres and chainsaws.**

**RRP: $1958 full-length; $1578 half-length (sans fitting)**

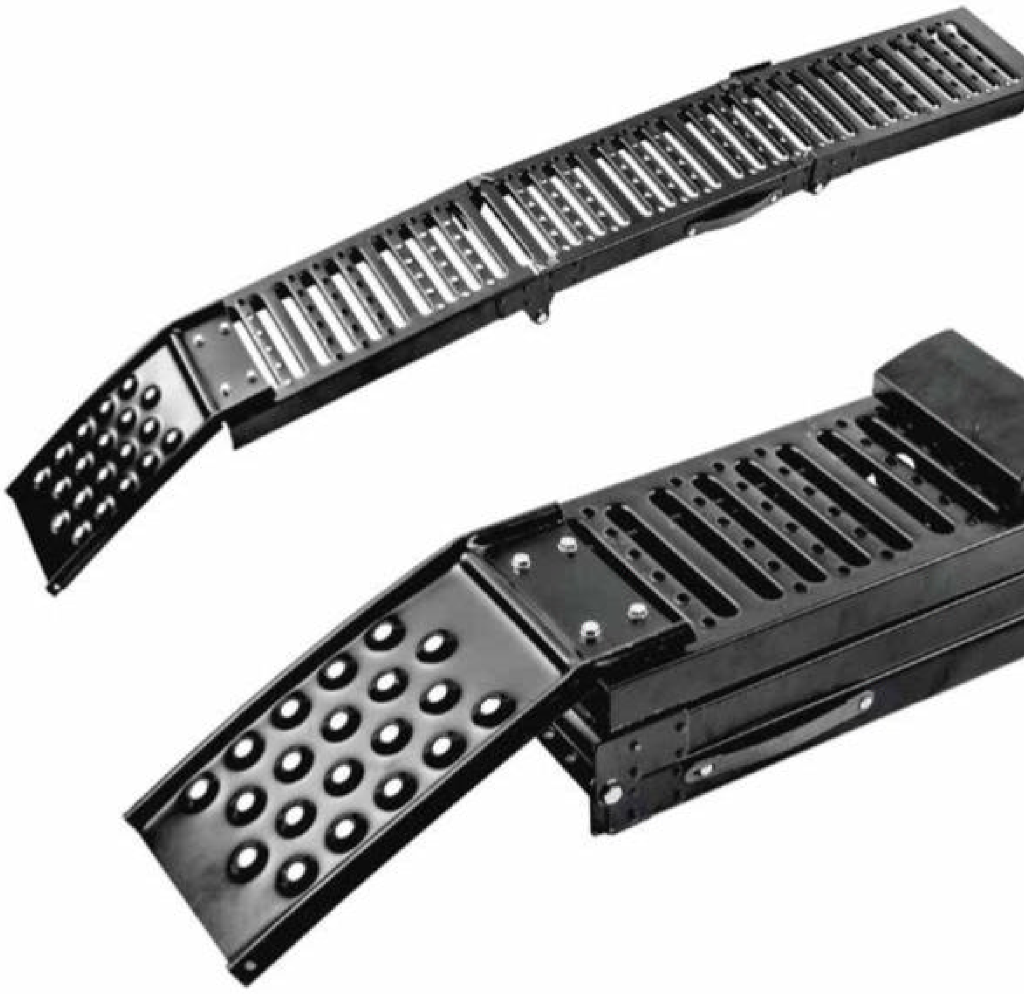
**WEBSITE: www.ironman4x4.com**

## HULK 4X4 2-IN-1 FOLDABLE STEEL RAMP SET

**New to the Hulk 4x4 range is a 2-in-1 foldable steel ramp set, to help safely load and unload equipment on your vehicle. These sturdy arched-design ramps are dual-purpose and can also be used to elevate vehicles up to 160mm. Sold in a set of two, the ramps have a total elevation capacity of 1500kg per pair, and offer a combined loading capacity of 500kg per pair. When folded, the ramps measure just 900mm long (2000mm when open) making them easy to store when heading off-road. Hulk 4x4 also has a range of aluminium heavy-duty ramps which are ideal for loading UTVs, ATVs, golf buggies, ride-on lawn mowers, quad bikes, dirt bikes, motorcycles and agricultural equipment.**

**RRP: $360**

**WEBSITE: www.hulk4x4.com.au**



Bendix
ULTIMATE
4WD
DISC BRAKE PADS
Absolute Stopping Power
Ceramic Formulation
Low Dust, Low Noise
Mechanical Retention System

## BENDIX ULTIMATE 4WD BRAKE PADS

**If you have fitted bigger tyres or added more weight to your four-wheel drive, the easiest and most cost-effective starting point to improving braking performance is to invest in upgraded brake pads such as Bendix's Ultimate 4WD Disc Brake Pads. Bendix tells us these pads are engineered for extreme conditions and hardworking 4WD applications; they also feature Bendix's premium Mechanical Retention System (MRS) for improved pad attachment strength, and a high-tech ceramic formulation that provide low dust and noise. Available for a wide range of 4WDs on the Australian market, Bendix also offers complete brake upgrades if you need further braking performance.**

**RRP: POA**

**WEBSITE: www.bendix.com.au**

FUEL FORGED

## FUEL VENTURA FF116 FORGED WHEELS

**Fuel Wheels has done it again, with the recent announcement of its range of Forged polished alloy wheels to suit larger four-wheel drives such as Ford F-trucks, Chevy Silverado or RAM vehicles. Each wheel in the Forged line-up is machined from 6061 T-6 aluminium alloy monoblock forgings and manufactured in the USA. Featuring a fully polished finish, the Fuel Ventura is sure to make your big rig pop both around town or on the tracks. Sizes in the Fuel Ventura FF116 Forged wheels range from 20 inches in diameter all the way up to 26 inches.**

**RRP: POA**

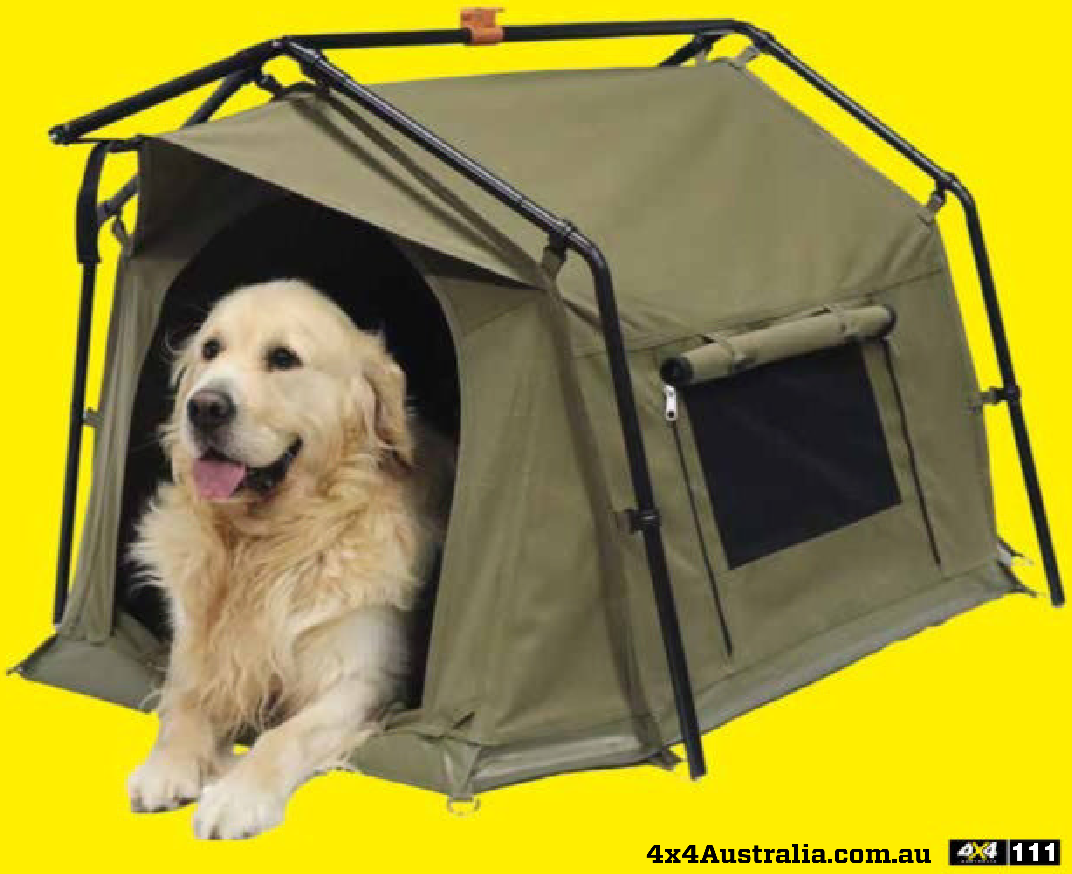
**WEBSITE: www.wheelprosaustralia.com.au**

## 23ZERO WOOF DEN DOG SWAG

**Why shouldn't your pet dog have more comfort when camping? 23Zero decided that man's best friend needed a swag of their own, with the introduction of the aptly named Woof Den. The Woof Den is constructed from proofed tear-check poly-cotton canvas, with an easy-action trigger-lock ridge pole for quick and easy set up. There's even a large arched entry with canopy above, side screened windows for ventilation and a fully welded PVC tub-style floor to keep your dog's bed dry in rainy conditions. The only thing you'll need to add is your pet's own mattress, and you and your dog are set for adventure.**

**RRP: $149.95**

**WEBSITE: www.23zero.com.au**



BAJA LEGEND EXP
MICKEY THOMPSON

## MICKEY THOMPSON BAJA LEGEND EXP

The Mickey Thompson Baja Legend EXP is a 60-per-cent on-road, 40-per-cent dirt and mud tyre that has been designed as a combination of an all-and a mud-terrain tyre. Offering a strong carcass found in a mud-terrain tyre, with the road handling and lower noise levels of an all-terrain tyre. They feature functional side biters for extra grip and protection, a large surface area tread element, stone ejectors, and a chemically coupled silica compound that is said to improve wet-weather grip and cut resistance. Available in a wide range of sizes from 31 to 35 inches, and suitable for rim sizes from 15 to 20 inches in diameter.

**RRP: POA**
**WEBSITE: www.mickeythompsontires.com.au**

## HARDKORR 40A DC-DC BATTERY CHARGER

This 40A DC-DC battery charger from Hardkorr is designed to work with lithium, AGM/Gel, Lead Acid or Calcium dual-battery set-ups. It also features an inbuilt MPPT solar regulator, allowing you to connect solar panels directly to the DC-DC, saving time, money and space over having to purchase an additional solar controller. Compatible with vehicles that utilise either traditional fixed-rate or smart alternators, the Hardkorr 40A DC-DC charges batteries using a five-stage charging algorithm to ensure they are charged and ready to go when you need to power accessories at camp. Another neat feature is the inclusion of an app that allows you to monitor the state of charge of your batteries, as well as solar and DC input levels.

**RRP: $429**
**WEBSITE: www.hardkorr.com.au**

## JETBOIL GENESIS BASECAMP SYSTEM

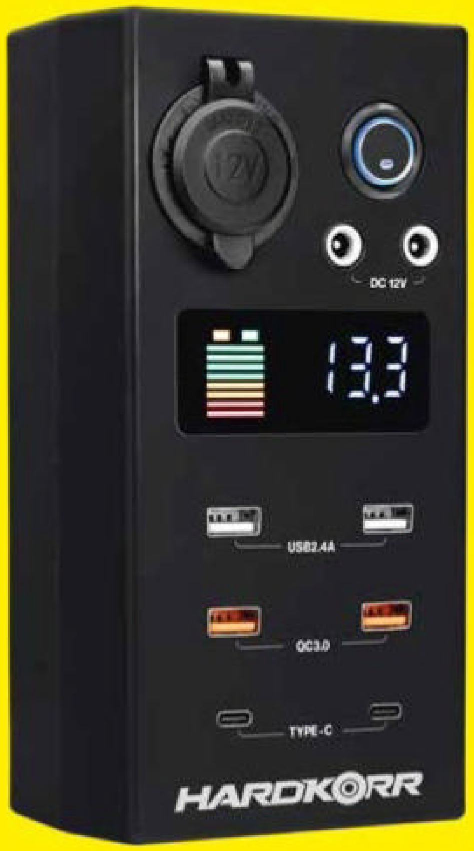
Designed to handle cooking duties for three to five people, the Jetboil Genesis Basecamp System is a compact cooking system that packs a punch. With 10,000 BTU heating, Jetboil claims the Genesis Basecamp can boil one litre of water in just over three minutes, perfect for a roadside cup of coffee. Included in the Genesis Basecamp System is a 10-inch frypan, a five-litre Flux pot and a carry bag with pocket. Everything packs down into itself, making the Genesis Basecamp easy to store when not in use, while providing plenty of space when using it for cooking or boiling water.

**RRP: $649**
**WEBSITE: jetboil.com**

## IRONMAN 4X4 RIDGE POLE SWAG

**Ironman 4x4's latest swag is a completely new design, moving away from its previous three-hoop design to a simplified two-hoop with tensioning centre ridge pole. This simplifies set-up and pack-down times and provides greater volume with no tapering at the waist and legs. The Ridge Pole Swag is constructed from genuine 420gsm poly-cotton canvas, with a 600gsm PVC base to keep water out. To offer a comfortable night sleep, Ironman 4x4 has included a thick 70mm high-density foam mattress, and you can purchase both the Ridge Pole Swag in either single or double configurations depending on how much space you need.**

**RRP: $439 single; $479 double**
**WEBSITE: www.ironman4x4.com/swags**



## HARDKORR 12V DC POWER DISTRIBUTION BOX

**This 12V power distribution box is a plug-and-play unit allowing you to easily distribute 12V power from your second battery. Hardkorr tells us you can use this distribution box to power up to 13 different appliances simultaneously, and it includes a range of outlets for different devices. There are four Anderson plug input/outputs, two USB outlets, two QC3.0 USB outlets, two USB-C outlets, two cigarette outlets, and two DC barrel outputs, to charge everything from your phone to a fridge. There is also an inbuilt voltmeter so you can keep an eye on the health of your auxiliary battery, and it comes complete with mounting bracket and hardware for a neat and simple installation.**

**RRP: $149**
**WEBSITE: www.hardkorr.com.au**

PROJECTA
13.7
VOLTS
WATTS/LOADS
ECO
SAFETY SWITCH
OFF
ON
PROJECTA
STATUS
13.7
VOLTS
WATTS/LOADS
ECO
OFF/ON

## PROJECTA 3000W PURE SINE WAVE INVERTER

**With high-powered lithium batteries now being the go-to for dual-battery set-ups, more and more people are bringing appliances such as coffee makers, sandwich presses or even air fryers along on trips. To power these products, you're going to need a large inverter such as this 3000W unit from Projecta. Being a pure sine wave inverter, it is also safe to charge sensitive electronics like laptops. Offering peak output of 6000W for up to three seconds, and 4200W for three minutes, Projecta's 3000W inverter has plenty of grunt to power your campsite, and even features an Eco mode to reduce current draw at the touch of a button.**

**RRP: POA**
**WEBSITE: www.projecta.com.au**

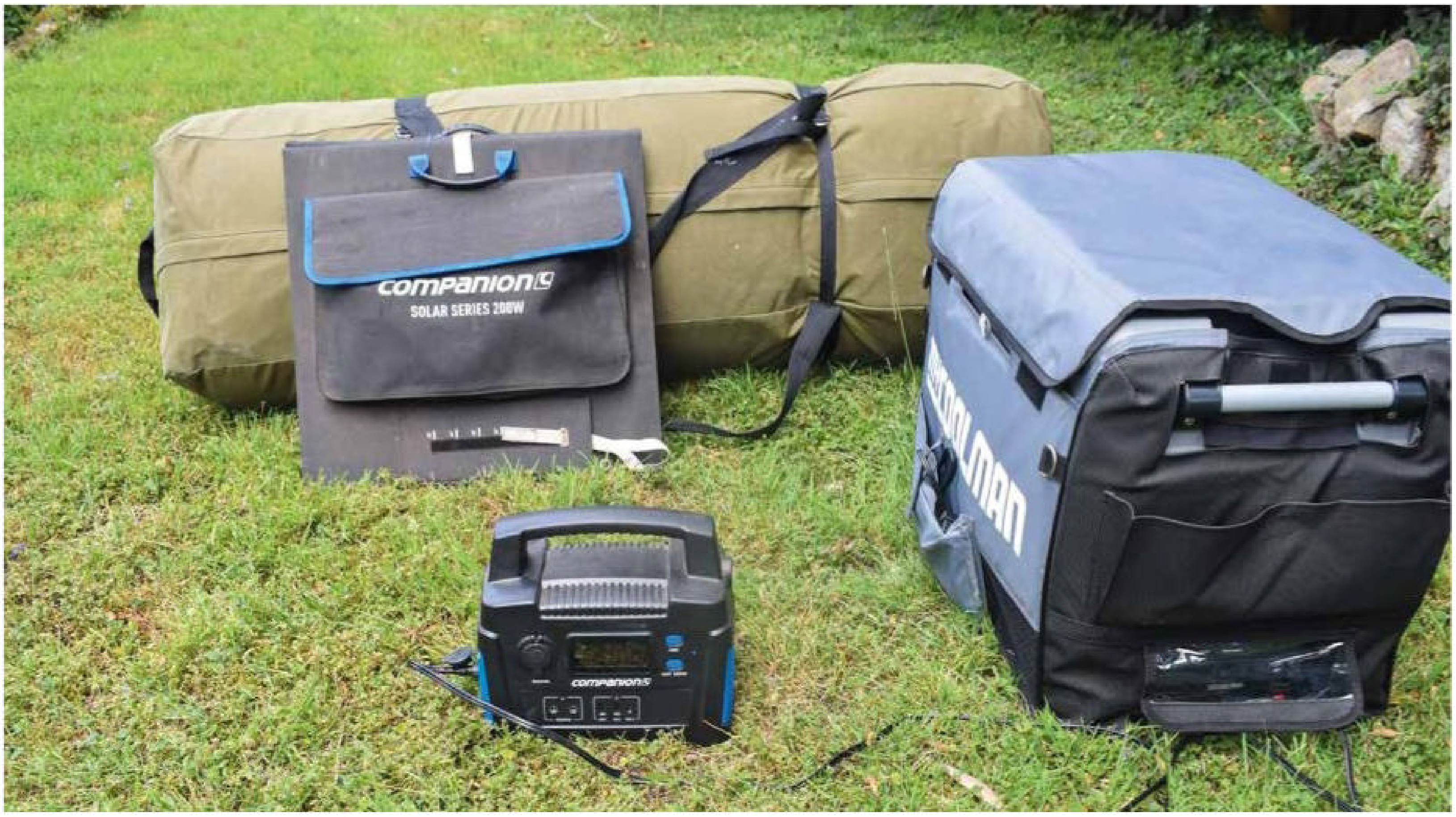
# PORTABLE POWER ON THE GO

## HOW ARE THE COMPANION 200W FOLDING SOLAR PANEL AND ROVER 40 LITHIUM POWER STATION HOLDING UP AFTER A YEAR OF USE AND ABUSE?

**WORDS** EVAN SPENCE

I HAVE always been adamant that a good 12V system with dual batteries is one of the best additions you can make to a touring four-wheel drive. I feel lost without a reliable way to keep my fridge cool, lights powered and electronic gear charged. My Hilux is well set-up in this regard, but my FJ Cruiser and myriad press cars I'm lucky enough to find myself driving aren't – so it was time to think of a way to have the best of both worlds. Enter the Rover 40 Lithium Power Station from Companion, mated to a Companion 200W folding solar blanket. A portable lithium and solar set-up I can charge at home, and then take from car to car and campsite to campsite.

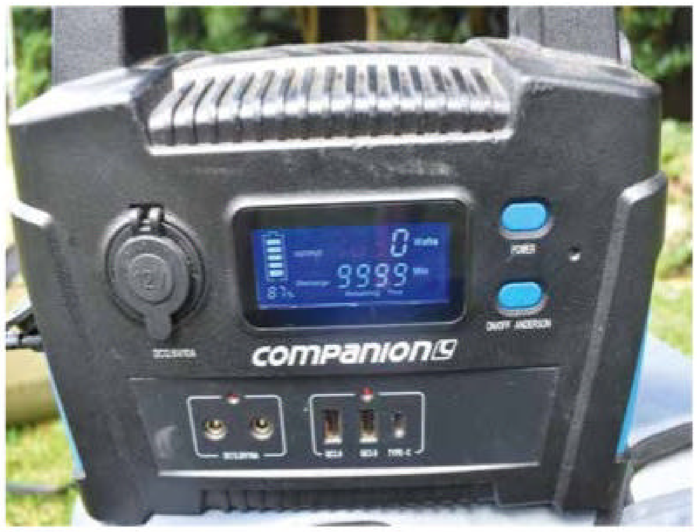
The Companion Rover 40 Power Station is small in size but packs a decent punch, offering 40amp of lithium power in a package that weighs just 6.5kg, which is enough to keep my 47L myCOOLMAN fridge running for just under two full days without a charge. I can charge the power station back up via 240V mains, 12V or solar. What I usually do is ensure the power



**POWER PACKS**
The complete set-up for powering the

**PORTABILITY**
The diminutive Power Station fights above its weight class.

> THEY HAVE OUTPERFORMED MY EXPECTATIONS, AND HAVING PORTABLE POWER ON THE GO IS PRICELESS



station is fully charged before leaving on a trip, run my fridge off a 12V outlet in the vehicle when moving, and then plug the fridge into the Companion Rover 40 when at camp. It will accept a maximum of 5amp charge from the 200W Companion solar blanket (or any solar panel) which is somewhat limiting, but it hasn't caused an issue as I'm putting in more than I'm taking out.

This set-up has come in handy around home, too. We seem to experience a fair few power outages here, so having a backup power source has proven invaluable. Features include a USB-C output that will charge my laptop, two USB points, an Anderson plug output (perfect for my fridge), two CIG outputs (one is a two-pin socket that also works with my fridge), and two DC DC5523 points that can be used for lighting. There's even a torch built into the Rover 40.

Connecting the Companion 200W solar blanket (they call it a Solar Charger) is as simple as plugging it to the solar input of the Rover 40 with the supplied cables. You get plenty of cable options included in the Rover 40, which is great to see. There's no need to run a separate solar regulator either, as the Rover 40 has an inbuilt MPPT solar controller.

When connecting the Companion 200W Solar Charger to my vehicle's battery, it could produce at best 10amp of output, which is fine by me. Companion claims a maximum output figure of 11.1amp per hour, so it's not far off the money. Overall, the quality of the panel feels really good, and I see no reason at this stage to add more solar to my kit as this seems to be a sweet spot for my needs.

I'm in the process of installing a 100amp lithium dual-battery set-up in my FJ Cruiser, but I'll continue to use both the Rover 40 and 200W Solar Charger. So far, they have outperformed my expectations, and having portable power when on the go is priceless as far as I'm concerned.

# COOKING WITH GAS

## CAN YOUR BARBY BOIL THE BILLY? ZIGGY CAN

**RATED**

**RRP: $399**
**Half Hotplate $80; Half Grill $60; Trivet Kit $80; canvas barbecue bag $142**

**AVAILABLE FROM:** zieglerandbrown.com.au

**WE SAY:** Good quality and Aussie made. Great heat output and good control. With the trivet kit, it's even more flexible to use.

WORDS RON MOON

WITH wood fires banned in many places and with those restrictions seemingly becoming more and more common, we've been using gas-fired barbecues for our most recent cooking needs when we've been travelling.

For a while we used a Weber Baby Q, and while a great barbecue and oven it wasn't much good at boiling a jug of water or cooking up some mash spud in a saucepan.

A year or so ago, we received as a gift from Toyota (we're still waiting for our LandCruiser) a Ziggy Portable Grill, and, up until then, we had never heard of this Aussie-designed and -made portable grill unit. Similar in looks and size to a Weber Baby Q with a single burner, we soon discovered it was even better suited to our wandering ways. For starters, the lid and the full-size grill plate locks in place for travelling by two easy-to-use locking pins located on each side of the unit.

Then we discovered there were a few accessories that enhanced its use in the bush (or backyard) even further. A Trivet Kit allows for the effective use of a kettle, frypan or saucepan, which can also be used in conjunction with a half grill or half hotplate, thereby extending your cooking and heating options.

In use, the lid can be fully opened or set in a halfway position, the latter relying on the grease cup on the underside of the unit to be in the screwed open position.

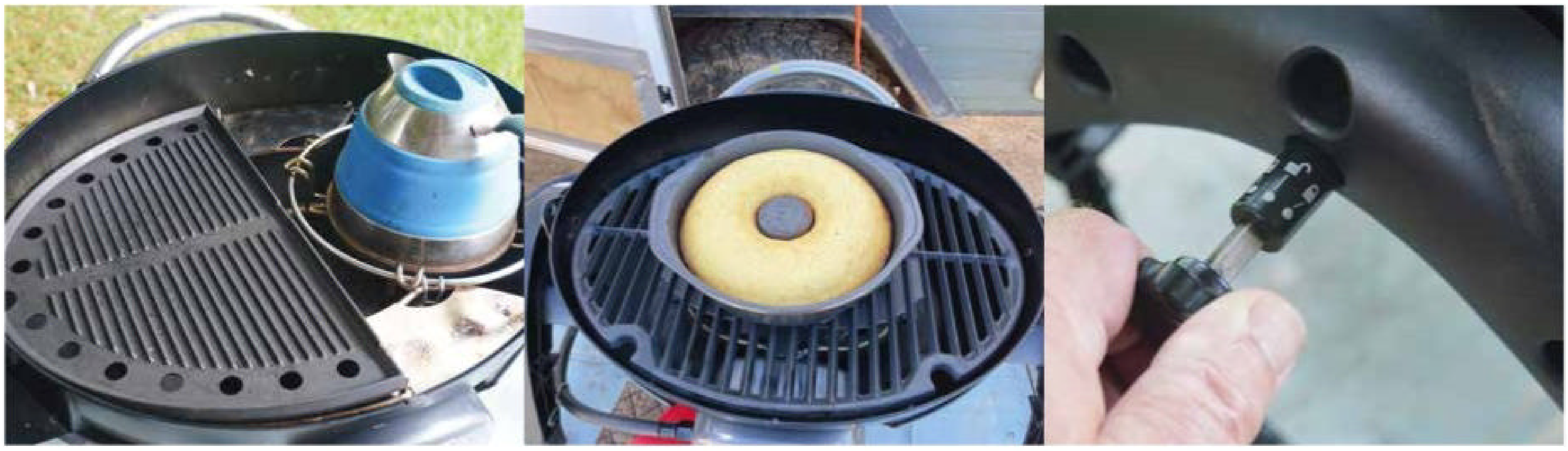
167·XJK
KIT BAG

MAXTRAX

ROPE DAMPENER
MAXTRAX
BAG
MAXTRAX
KR10
CORE SHACKLE
WINCH RING 120
FUSE SHACKLE

**RECOVERY SYSTEM AVAILABLE NOW**

**SHOP ONLINE AT MAXTRAX.COM.AU**

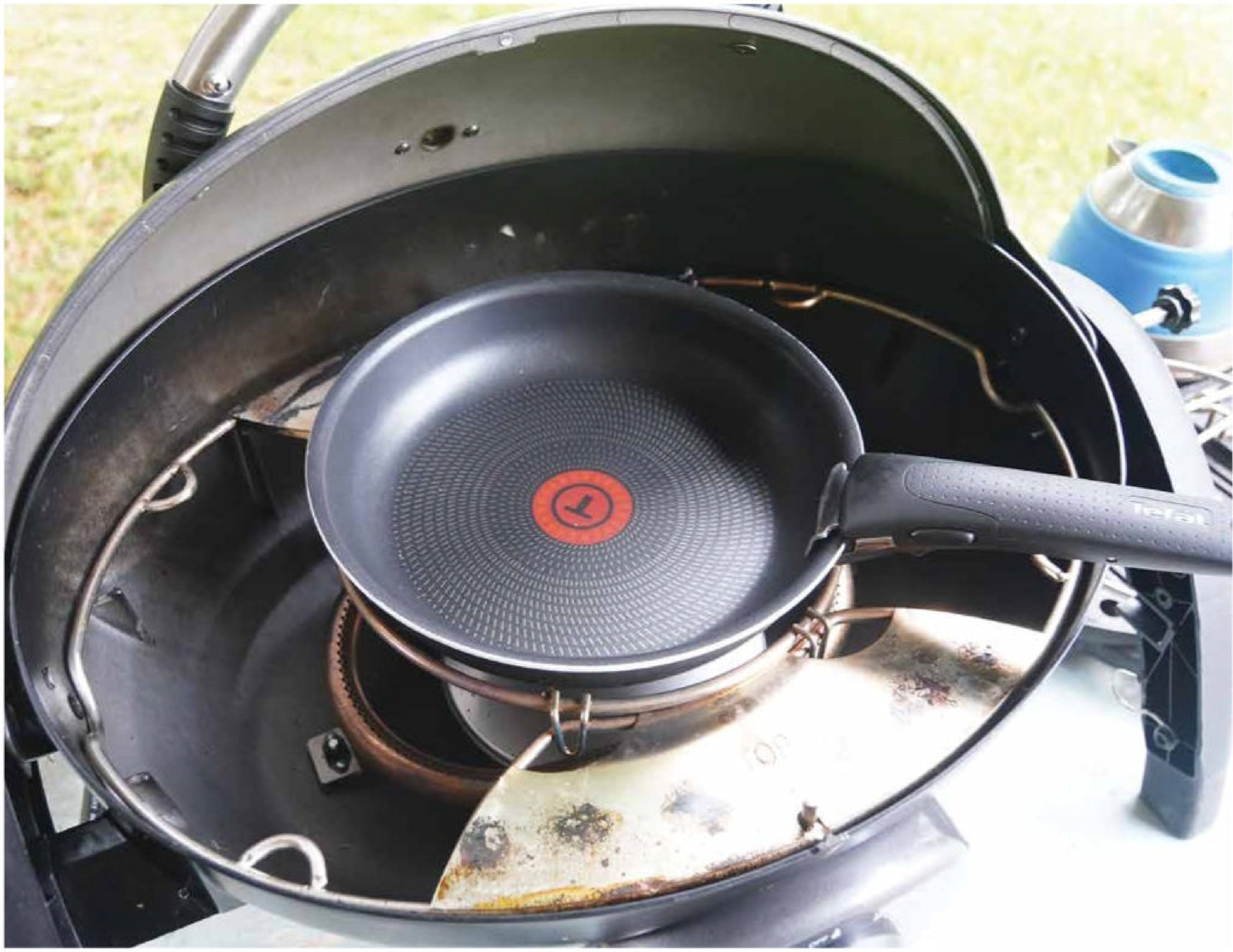


**PICS RIGHT**
Ziggy is more than just a barby, and has a grill and hood-locking system for travel too.

The cup, as the name suggests, collects any oil and grease from the cooking operation, while also allowing good airflow to the burner.

The unit fires up easily and we have found it burns hotter when in its maximum heat setting than its lookalike competition. The heat output is adjustable and we have cooked everything from steaks and roasts to cakes in the Ziggy. The trivet kit allows for a kettle (amongst others) to be effectively boiled and, while I was initially sceptical about its heating performance in such a role, I was more than pleasantly surprised to the point we don't bother carrying another separate stove for such operations.

The RRP is comparable to similar models of portable grills and you can find the Ziggy range in all major barbecue outlets. With a seven-year warranty, you really can't go wrong. Make sure you check the Ziggy range (by Ziegler & Brown) next time you are in the market for a gas barbecue/grill, as we use this portable single burner at home as well as out in the bush.



**FRY UP**
The Trivet Kit's single-hob set-up for kettles, billies, pots and frypans.

HULK 4X4

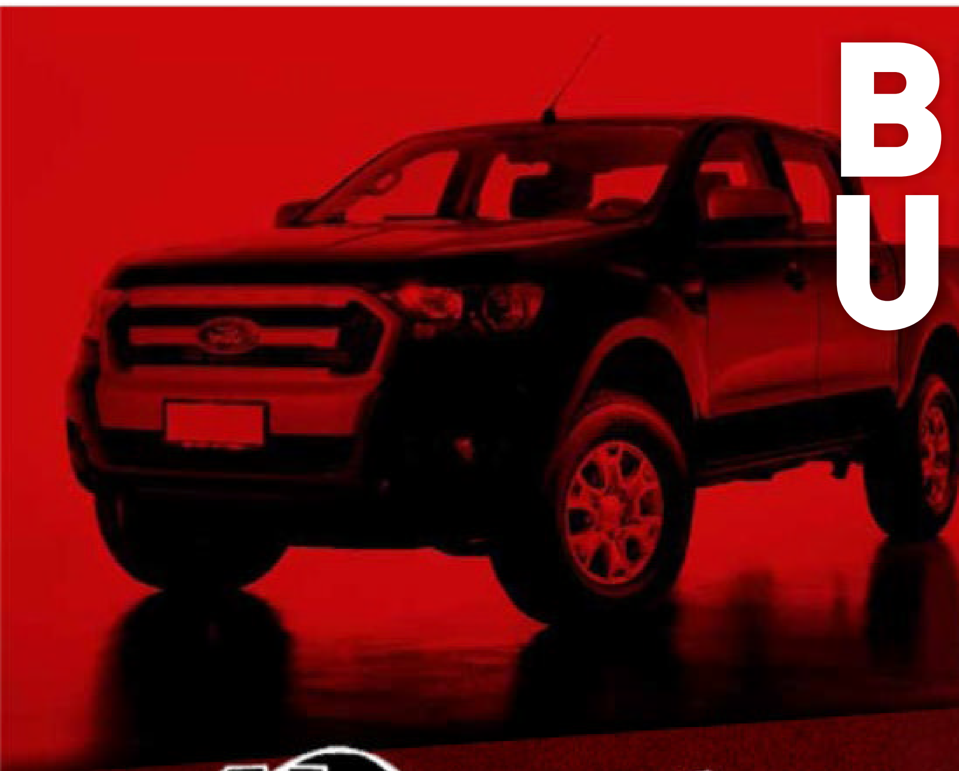
BIG. STRONG. TUFF.

RAMP UP WITH HULK 4X4

HEAVY-DUTY REINFORCED ALUMINIUM RAMPS

Ramps for loading UTVs, ATVs, golf buggies, ride-on lawn mowers, quad bikes, dirt bikes, motorcycles and agricultural equipment.

To find out more, please visit **HULK4X4.com.au** or your local HULK4X4 distributor



BIG BRAKE UPGRADES

TO SUIT YOUR 4X4

AUSTRALIAN OWNED & MADE

Supporting Australian Small Business!

- Hilux
- Ranger
- Bt50
- Colorado
- D-max
- M-UX
- Trail Blazer
- Rodeo
- Triton
- Challenger

*REQUIRE 17" WHEELS MINIMUM.

dba
4X4 SURVIVAL

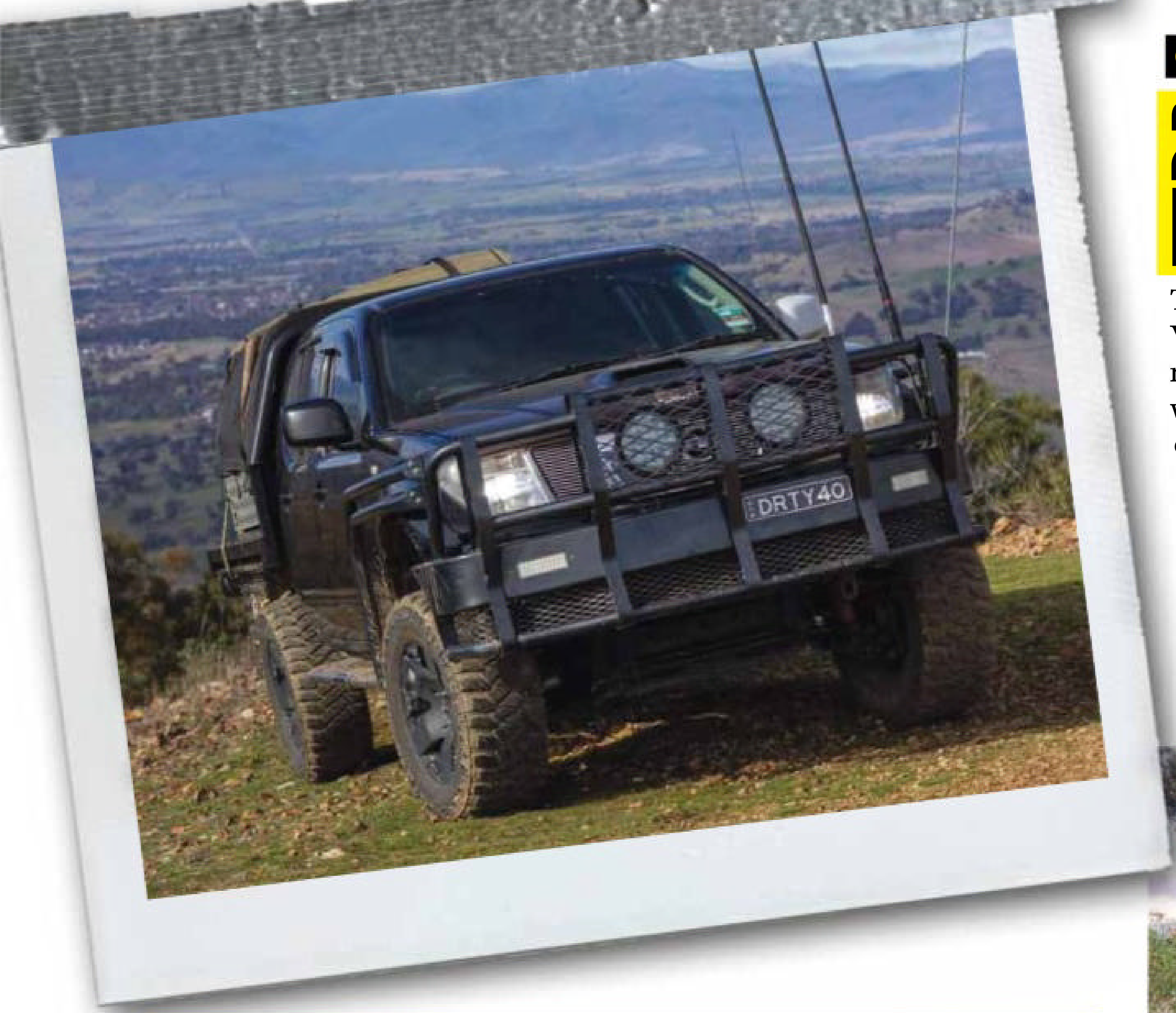
Hoppers STOPPERS

hoppers.com.au

Call (03) 9748 6950
9 Nevada Crt, Hoppers Crossing, VIC 3029
E: hopstop@hoppers.com.au F: (03) 9748 5965

# READERS RIGS

**WANT TO SEE YOUR 4x4 PUBLISHED IN THE MAG? SEND US A PIC VIA OUR FACEBOOK PAGE!**



**COOPER JAMES ARTHUR**

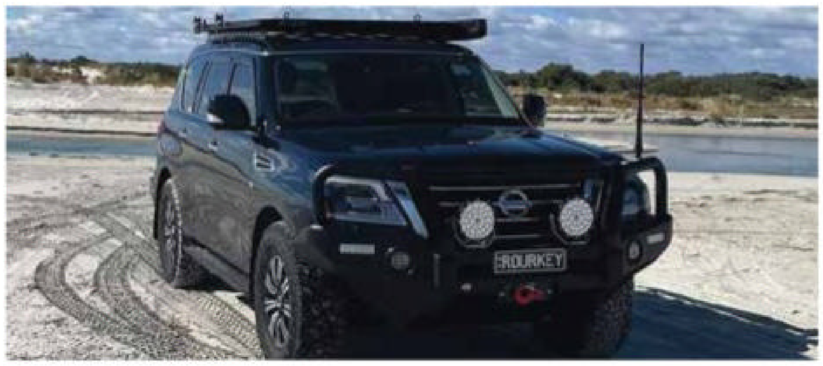
## 2011 NISSAN NAVARA D40

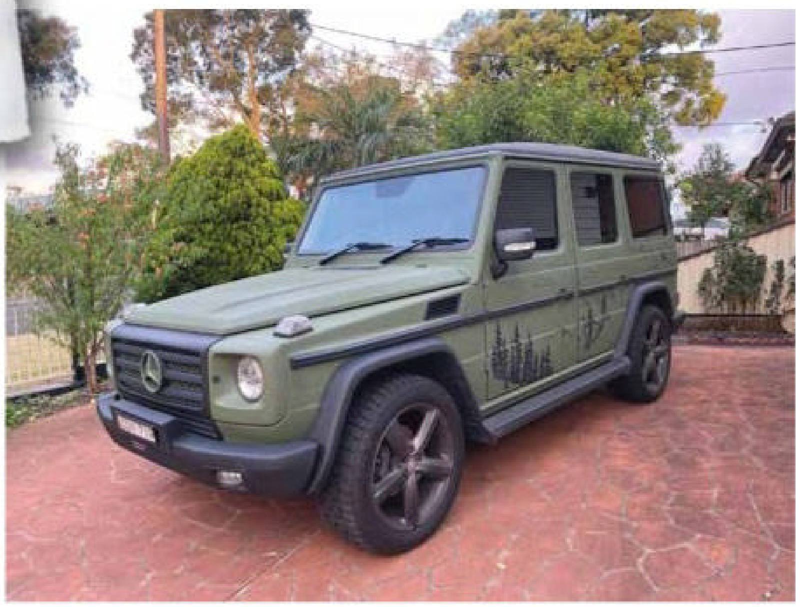
The car has been halfway around the map, but the Vic High Country is always a cracking time. Since moving down to Victoria we get up there whenever we can. Modifications include five-inch lift (Calmini diff drop, OA front struts, Patrol rear); 18-inch wheels wrapped in 33-inch MTZs; Hopper Knocker bar work; tray swap; dog box; and a chipped and tuned 180hp.

**PETER ROURKE**

## 2021 NISSAN Y62 PATROL

Kit added to this Y62 includes a 4085 GVM upgrade; Raslarr rear bar; jerry can carrier; tyre carrier; Rhino roof rack; carbon winch; Opposite Lock bullbar; Black Label rear drawers; a 200amp/h lithium battery; and a 2000W inverter.

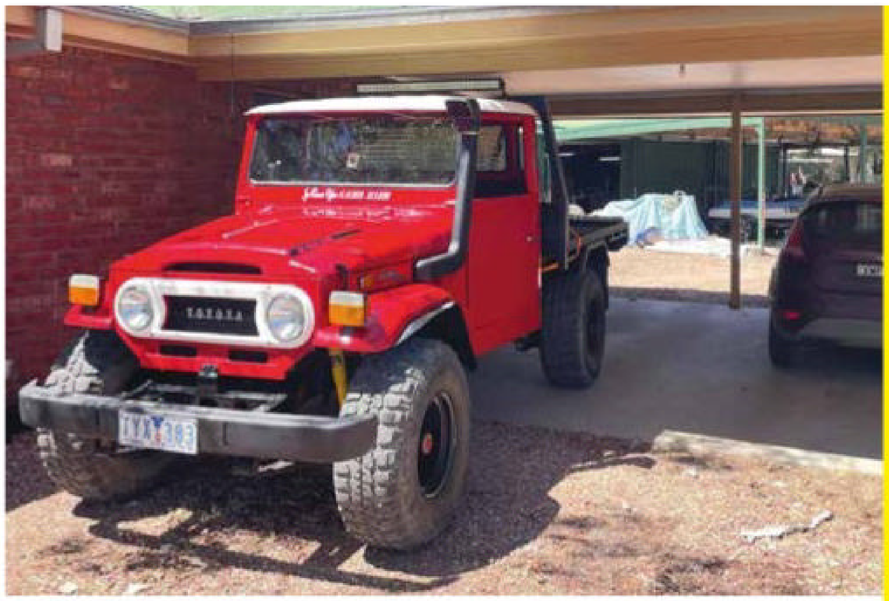




**ANDY MAI**

## MERCEDES-BENZ G-WAGEN

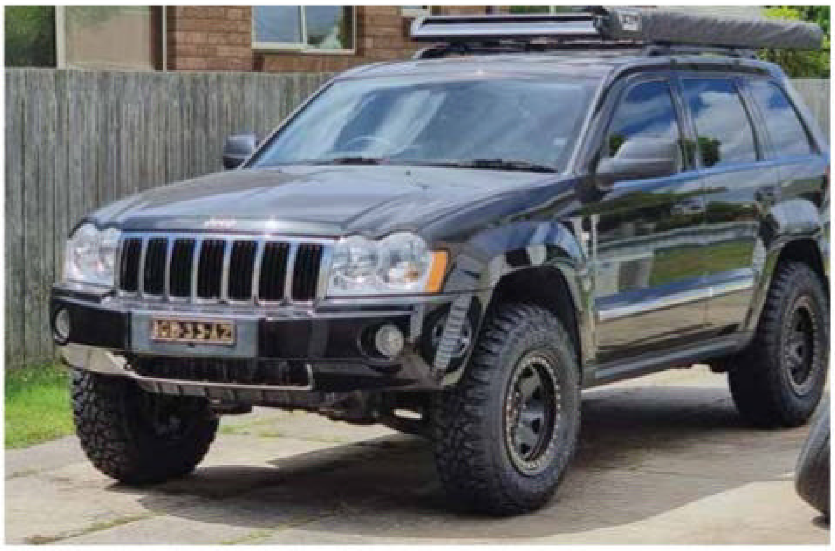
Here's a recent makeover we did on my G-Wagen. Working with Raptor King Customs, VGA Auto Paints and Raptor Coatings, we all put in blood, sweat and tears to get this wrap completed – all to raise awareness for men's mental health. We plan to take it into the Snowy Mountains this upcoming winter for the Men's Mental Health Retreat. This super-long journey has led to so many lifelong friendships, and thanks to all the parties that helped make this possible.



**JETT PATULLO**

## 1970 TOYOTA FJ45

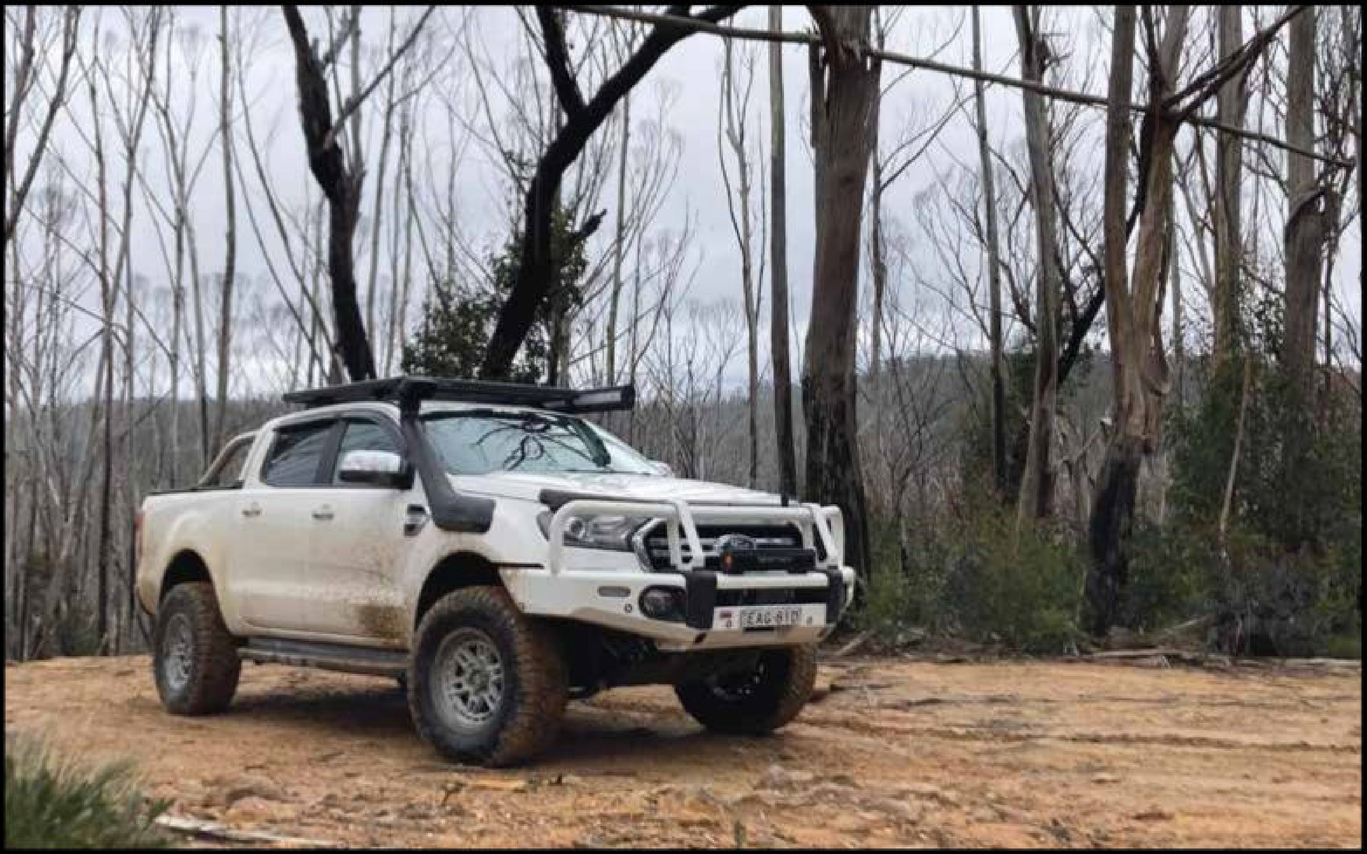
This FJ45 was originally cadet blue ordered for the Navy, and she's been an ongoing project for around the last 26 years. The old boy did the rust and paint in the late '90s and there it sat until early 2021, where we thought we'd pull it out and get her on the road. It's now January 2023 and it has just gone in for a roadworthy. It's running a Ford 250 Crossflow engine.



**JAMIE PHILPOTTS**

## 2007 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE

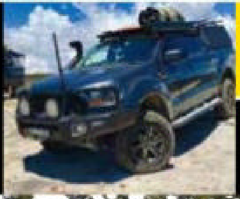
It's the variant with the 5.7-litre Hemi. It also has a two-inch lift, 32-inch muddies, Android head unit, roof rack, 2.5m awning and shower awning, and rear drawers.



**SANDRO TERLIZZI**

## 2019 FORD RANGER XLT

It's a PX3 with the 3.2-litre engine. Modifications include an OME two-inch lift; Safari Armax snorkel; a Stedi light bar fitted to an ARB Summit bullbar; RAZR 33-inch tyres on Fuel wheels; a Yakima roof rack with Darche side awning; and a GME radio.



**2020 PXIII FORD RANGER XLS SPORT AUTO**

0127679 KM

**DATE ACQUIRED:** DEC 2022
**PRICE:** $51,640
**KM SINCE LAST:** 5283KM
**AV FUEL:** 12.6L/100KM

# OFF-ROAD RANGER

## DEANO'S RANGER DOESN'T GET DRIVEN A LOT, BUT THERE'S PLENTY OF DIRT INVOLVED WHEN IT DOES

WORDS DEAN MELLOR

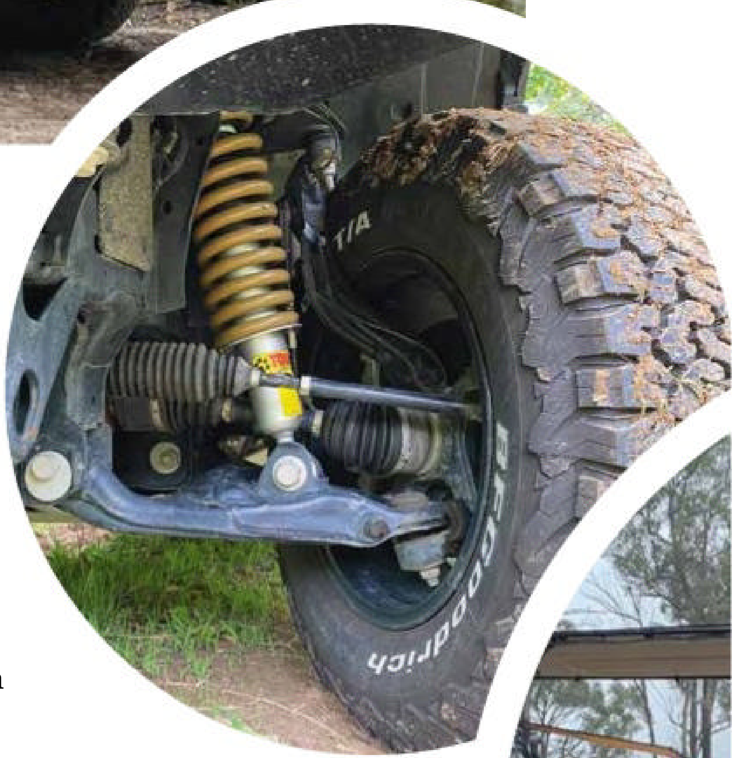
IT HAS been a few months since the last update on my Ford Ranger and in that time it's only covered a paltry 5000km, but a fair chunk of that has been off-road. Yep, the Ranger is parked safely at home for much of the time, but when there's work to do, or I want to get away for the weekend with my family, it gets plenty of dirt under its wheels.

Since the last update the Ranger has been subjected to several work trips with Offroad Images' Michael Ellem to shoot a series of 'How To' features and videos for *4X4 Australia* and, as a result, it has been buried up to its axles in sand, bogged in deep mud, teetered over the edge of a rocky drop-off, and subjected to several steep climbs and descents.

Despite being buried and bogged, the bodywork looks as good as new. The same can't be said for the ARB side rails and ARB rear-step towbar, which have copped a fair beating off-road, but that is what they are designed to do and, other than scratches, there is no damage to report. Ditto for the ARB UVP (under-vehicle protection) plate, which also wears battle scars from many contacts with terra firma.

The LT265/70R17 BFGoodrich All Terrain tyres are wearing well and show no signs of chipping across the tread face or damage to the sidewalls, despite all the off-road punishment. The BFGs are about due for a rotation, and as I managed to pick up an extra matching alloy wheel to replace the OE steely that Ford supplies, I will throw the spare in the mix.

I'm impressed with the Tough Dog suspension, both on the road and off it. The Ranger is carrying a fair bit of weight thanks to its steel bar and Warn VR EVO 10-S winch fitted up front and its canopy and drawer system down the back. Yet it sits nicely on the road at a smidge under 75mm higher than standard, of which around 50mm can be attributed to the suspension and around 25mm to the slightly larger-than-standard tyres. The ride quality is impressive and body roll is well-controlled when cornering, despite the extra weight.



**THE DRAWERS HAVE IT**
Easy-access side-by-side drawers in the tub is the standard set-up these days.

A fair bit of that weight is now up high, thanks to a 68kg OZtrail Tarkine 1400 rooftop tent I recently fitted above the canopy on a pair of Yakima roof bars. While I could have fitted the RTT to the Ranger's Rhino-Rack Pioneer Platform, 68kg would have been right on the limit of dynamic roof load, which is reduced significantly when driving off-road with the Pioneer set-up. The Yakima bars are good for 100kg though, and I have been assured by the importer of the canopy that it is too. I've already given the OZtrail RTT a run on a weekend getaway, and I'll aim to do a full review on it in the next month or so.

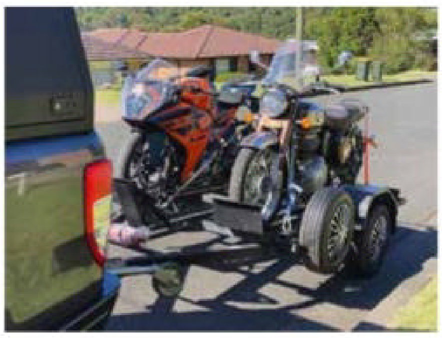
I have also been using the Ranger to tow a bike trailer, and to keep an eye on the bikes I recently installed a Gator rear-view camera/mirror that I picked up at Supercheap Auto. The Gator is also handy for keeping an eye on following traffic that I haven't been able to monitor since fitting the canopy, and it also acts as a rear-view dashcam; so if someone runs up the back of the Ranger I'll have video evidence. I'll do a review on the Gator once I've used it a bit more.

Another handy little bit of kit I picked up recently was a Quad Lock Wireless CarPlay Adaptor. This little device plugs into the Ranger's USB port in the centre console and then connects to your phone via Bluetooth, allowing for wireless CarPlay. It connects automatically when you get in your car so you can leave your phone in your pocket.

Other gear fitted since the last update includes a 100Ah slimline lithium battery, a CTEK DS250SE battery charger, 12V and USB outlets in the drawer system, and a Razed Products MaxTrax Flush Mounting Kit.

The Ranger recently scored a minor service and there are no faults to report. However, about six months ago I kept getting a message on the FordPass app that there was a problem with an airbag sensor and I should take the Ranger to a dealer for inspection. Apparently there was a loose sensor plug down by the driver's seat which was quickly sorted. Speaking of the FordPass app, it's bloody fantastic; I can check the odo, lock and unlock the doors, and reset the alarm if it goes off … all from my phone. I can even start the engine on hot days to get the air-con going to cool down the cabin before I hop in. The app also shows me where the vehicle is parked and reminds me when a service is due. It's the little things like this that improve the ownership experience.

As you'd expect, fuel consumption has been on the rise as I have added accessories and gear to the Ranger since I have owned it, and it's now up to 12.6L/100km. The highest consumption to date has been 14.6L/100km when towing my bike trailer, and since I fitted the rooftop tent it's been averaging 13.3L/100km. The RTT will be coming off when not in use.



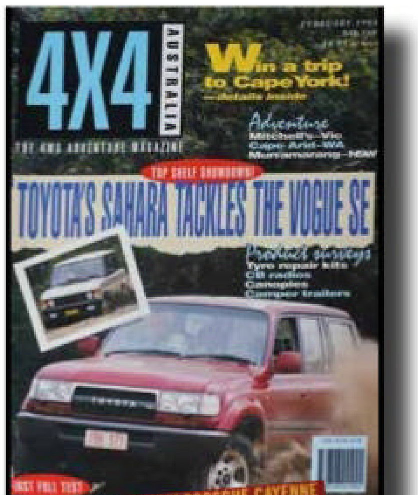
**EASY TOW**
With a couple of bikes behind, the Ranger makes towing a breeze.

# THE SCORE

THE ESSENTIAL NUMBERS AND PRICES OF EVERY 4X4 ON SALE IN AUSTRALIA

# REAR VIEW

***4X4 AUSTRALIA* LOOKS BACK AT THE CHANGES IN THE INDUSTRY, THE RISE IN OUTBACK TOURING, THE EVOLUTIONARY SOPHISTICATION OF 4X4S, AND MORE**



## 30 YEARS AGO – FEBRUARY 1993

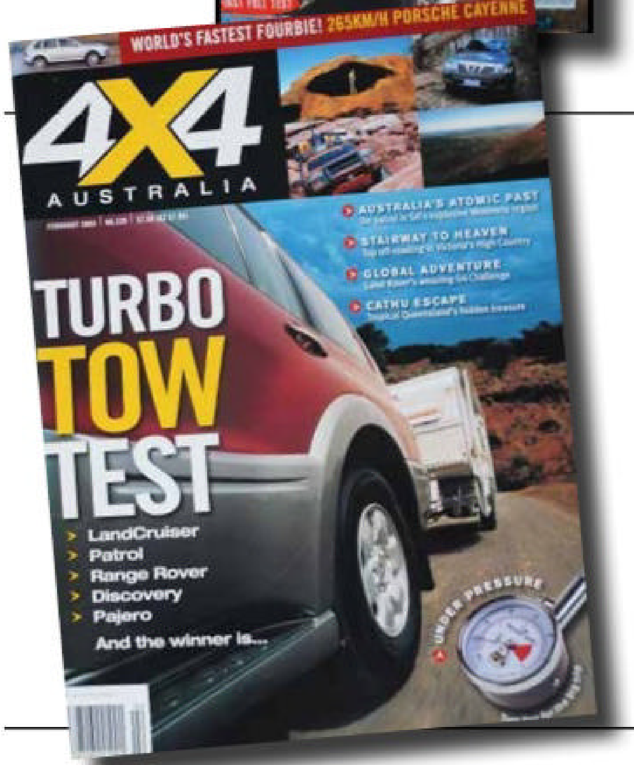
A top-of-the-line 'Cruiser took on a Vogue Rangie in this month's cover story and major comparo. While the Rangie had a 3.9-litre V8 under the bonnet, the Tojo had the then new 4.5-litre twin-cam straight-six petrol engine, which, maybe surprising to some, pipped the Rangie in both power and torque. Not as surprising though as Moonie, our tester in this report, would have taken the 'Cruiser home.

In other sections of the mag we checked out four flip-top camper trailers, the best CB radios for four wheelers including AM/SSB rigs which you don't see today, along with a bit of a survey and a rundown on the best canopies for your ute or tray.

We headed to Murramarang National Park in NSW, which is still a top spot to visit and camp; while in WA we went a lot more remote and headed east from Esperance along the wild coastline to Cape Arid.

In the featured trek this month, we took to the Victorian High Country and the route along the Mitchell Track, which is still a fan favourite today.

---



## 20 YEARS AGO – FEBRUARY 2003

In amongst a variety of car tests for this issue, veteran scribe Alan Whiting took to the road and back tracks to see which would make the best tow rig out of five turbo-diesel autos he put under the microscope. Lining up for this free-for-all was a 'Cruiser, a Patrol, Range Rover, a Land Rover Disco and last but not least, a Pajero. Cutting to the chase and after the dust had settled, the Patrol was dubbed the value-for-money winner!

Long-term desert adventurer Neil Cocks took us on a patrol around the perimeter of the Woomera Rocket Range, something that you'd be hard-pressed to do today or even get permission for. Up in Queensland, John McCann took us to Cathu State Forest, while Moonie was out and about in the Victorian High Country wandering south from the fabled Buckland Valley.

We checked out the latest GPS offering from Magellan, had a look at tyre pressures for off-roading (still mighty useful today, maybe even more so!) and featured a 10-point guide to towing safely.

---

4X4 AUSTRALIA
REAL AUSSIE HEROES!
OUR SEARCH & RESCUE ELITE IN ACTION
+ ULTIMATE TRIPS TO THE SIMPSON, FLINDERS, GAWLER

## 10 YEARS AGO – FEBRUARY 2013

This issue, under the guidance of Marcus Craft, was jam-packed with destination yarns that covered the length and breadth of Australia. Moonie was in amongst the ragged peaks of the Flinders Ranges in SA; Stuart Grant was crossing the Simpson Desert, he and the crew being breathalysed along the way; Mike and Anita Pavey were bouncing around in the Gawler Ranges; Danielle Sen was exploring the Southern Highlands of NSW; while Kev Smith was taking in the delights of the rugged country around Tenterfield.

The major comparo for this issue saw a Jeep Grand Cherokee take on a GXL 'Cruiser, both in V8 petrol form. The final result really depended on what type of travel you prefer – long-distance remote stuff or something closer to home.

For something a bit different though, we joined the paramedics for a special operation to see what went on behind the scenes. We then talked to Bruce Garland on his preparation for the Dakar.

## JUST THE FACTS

**Top-selling 4x4s in December 2022**
**Source: VFACTS**

| VEHICLE | UNITS |
|---|---|
| 1. Ford Ranger | 4113 |
| 2. Toyota Hilux | 3112 |
| 3. Toyota LandCruiser 300 | 1544 |
| 4. Isuzu D-MAX | 1380 |
| 5. Mazda BT-50 | 1061 |
| 6. Toyota Prado | 970 |
| 7. Isuzu MU-X | 944 |
| 8. Toyota LandCruiser 79 | 938 |
| 9. Ford Everest | 926 |
| 10. Mitsubishi Triton | 914 |

**Top-selling 4x4s in 2022**
**Source: VFACTS**

| VEHICLE | UNITS |
|---|---|
| 1. Toyota Hilux | 47,329 |
| 2. Ford Ranger | 43,128 |
| 3. Mitsubishi Triton | 23,953 |
| 4. Toyota Prado | 21,102 |
| 5. Isuzu D-MAX | 20,124 |
| 6. Toyota LandCruiser 300 | 13,152 |
| 7. Toyota LandCruiser 79 | 11,390 |
| 8. Isuzu MU-X | 10,987 |
| 9. Mazda BT-50 | 10,533 |
| 10. Ford Everest | 10,314 |

## HILUX TAKES THE 4X4 CROWN IN 2022

THE Ford Ranger was the biggest-selling vehicle in December as its arch-rival the Toyota Hilux claimed its seventh consecutive title as Australia's most popular model. Ford Australia sold 4663 units of its new-generation ute last month compared with 4271 units for the Toyota when combining 4x4 and 4x2 segments. The Ranger 4x4 beat the Hilux 4x4 by 1001 units. Hilux sales for 2022 were comfortably ahead of the Ranger – 64,391 registrations versus 47,479. Or considerably tighter when looking solely at 4x4 sales: 47,329 (Hilux) versus 43,128 (Ranger).

Compared with 2021, overall Toyota Hilux sales in 2022 increased by 11,590 units (up 22 per cent). Ford Ranger sales fell slightly from 50,225. Less than 5000 sales separated the two utes in the second half of the year, following the release of the latest-generation Ranger in July. In a sign of the Ranger's growing threat to the Hilux, Ford Australia increased sales of its ute by 40 per cent in the last six months of 2022 compared with the first six months. The Hilux's biggest advantage continues to be found in the 4x2 segment, where it led the Ranger by 17,062 to 4351 units last year.

The Ranger and Hilux were the only utes to feature in December's Top 10, with rare omissions for the Mitsubishi Triton and Isuzu D-MAX. The Triton placed fourth in 2022's Top 10 vehicle sales with 27,436 registrations. Still, the Triton was the third best-selling 4x4 variant in Australia in 2022, notching up a total of 23,953 sales.

The D-MAX finished seventh overall last year with 24,336 units. Other mid-sized utes to reach double figures last year included the Mazda BT-50 (12,937 sales; 10,533 4x4 sales) and Nissan Navara (10,526 sales; 8832 4x4 sales).

GWM's progress with its Cannon Ute continues, with sales growing to 7806 in 2022 (of which 7555 sales were the 4x4 variant). Sales of the other Chinese ute, the LDV T60, dropped below 6000 units. Toyota's LandCruiser 70 series finished the year with 11,390 sales, while the RAM 1500 pickup won the battle of the big trucks with 5481 sales.

## FORD

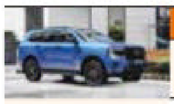
5-year/unlimited km **www.ford.com.au**

### RANGER

Ford introduces a V6 diesel powertrain for the next-gen Ranger, with the all-new model along with the carried over bi-turbo 2.0L. Full-time 4x4 is also offered on some models.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Single XL C/C | 47,030 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 1903 | 1327 | 3500 | 80 |
| Super XL C/C | 49,530 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2007 | 1223 | 3500 | 80 |
| Super XL P/U | 51,430 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2167 | 1063 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XL C/C | 48,280 | SiT4/2.0 | A6 | 405 | 125 | 2046 | 1144 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XL C/C | 51,780 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2072 | 1158 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XL P/U | 50,180 | SiT4/2.0 | A6 | 405 | 125 | 2190 | 1000 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XL P/U | 53,680 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2216 | 1014 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XLS P/U | 54,730 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2216 | 1014 | 3500 | 80 |
| Super XLT P/U | 59,990 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2178 | 1052 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XLT P/U | 61,990 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2225 | 1005 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XLT C/C | 63,290 | V6/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | 2129 | 1151 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double XLT P/U | 65,190 | V6/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | 2285 | 995 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double Sport P/U | 64,490 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2242 | 988 | 3500 | 80 |
| Double Sport P/U | 67,690 | V6/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | 2300 | 980 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dbl Wildtrak P/U | 67,990 | BiT4/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2295 | 985 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dbl Wildtrak P/U | 71,190 | V6/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | 2353 | 997 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dbl Platinum P/U | 76,990 | V6/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 80 |
| Dbl Raptor P/U | 86,790 | V6P/3.0 | A10 | 583 | 292 | 2431 | 753 | 2500 | 80 |

### EVEREST



Second-gen Ranger-based Everest arrived in 2022 in four variants, with a choice of two diesel engines: a carryover twin-turbo four-cylinder or a new single-turbo V6.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ambiente | 57,990 | L4TD/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2367 | 733 | 3500 | 80 |
| Trend | 65,290 | L4TD/2.0 | A10 | 500 | 154 | 2383 | 717 | 3500 | 80 |
| Sport | 69,090 | V6TD/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | 2454 | 696 | 3500 | 80 |
| Platinum | 77,690 | V6TD/3.0 | A10 | 600 | 184 | 2492 | 658 | 3500 | 80 |

## GWM

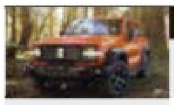
7-year/unlimited km **www.gmwute.com.au**

### UTE

Formerly Great Wall but now calling itself GWM, the brand's latest Ute comes in three 4x4 models, all double-cab, and all with the 2.0-litre engine and eight-speed auto.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Cannon | 38,990* | L4TD/2.0 | A8 | 400 | 120 | N/A | N/A | N/A | 75 |
| Cannon L | 37,990* | L4TD/2.0 | A8 | 400 | 120 | N/A | N/A | N/A | 75 |
| Cannon X | 45,490* | L4TD/2.0 | A8 | 400 | 120 | N/A | N/A | N/A | 75 |
| Vanta | 46,490* | L4TD/2.0 | A8 | 400 | 120 | N/A | N/A | N/A | 75 |

### TANK 300



Chinese-built Tank 300 may have similar design cues to the Jeep Wrangler, but it's powered exclusively by a 2.0-litre petrol-electric hybrid system.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Tank 300 Lux | 55,990 | L4HY/2.0 | A9 | 640 | 224 | 2331 | N/A | 2500 | 80 |
| Tank 300 Ultra | 60,990 | L4HY/2.0 | A9 | 640 | 224 | 2331 | N/A | 2500 | 80 |

## GMSV

**www.gmspecialtyvehicles.com.au**

### CHEVROLET SILVERADO 1500

General Motors Specialty Vehicles is part of the Walkinshaw Group and is responsible for importing, converting and marketing GM vehicles in Australia. Currently that is just the Silverado 1500, with more to come including Silverado 2500 and the Corvette sports car.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LT Trail Boss | 106,990* | V8/6.2 | A10 | 624 | 313 | 2540 | 760 | 4500 | 91 |
| LTZ Premium | 114,990* | V8/6.2 | A10 | 624 | 313 | 2588 | 712 | 4500 | 91 |

## HAVAL

5-year/100,000km **www.haval.com.au**

### H9

The Chinese-made Haval H9 is a midsize 4x4 from Great Wall's luxury arm. It's a relatively fresh arrival on the Aussie market.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H9 Lux | 41,990* | L4/2.0 | A8 | 350 | 180 | 2250 | 645 | 2500 | 80 |
| H9 Ultra | 45,990* | L4/2.0 | A8 | 350 | 180 | 2250 | 645 | 2500 | 80 |

*This is a nationwide drive-away price, not a list price, and includes on-roads.

## ISUZU UTE

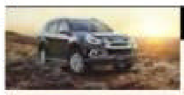
6-year/150,000km **www.isuzuute.com.au**

### D-MAX

All new D-MAX loses its links with GM and is an all-Isuzu affair. The new model is a huge step up with class-leading safety tech, more power and torque from the 3.0L, and fresh, aggressive styling.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SX Single c/c | 40,200 | I4TD/3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | 1780 | 1310 | 3500 | 76 |
| SX Single c/c | 42,200 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 1790 | 1310 | 3500 | 76 |
| SX Space c/c | 43,700 | I4TD/3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | 1850 | 1250 | 3500 | 76 |
| SX Space c/c | 45,700 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 1860 | 1240 | 3500 | 76 |
| LS-U Space p/u | 53,900 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2000 | 1100 | 3500 | 76 |
| SX Crew c/c | 46,700 | I4TD/3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | 1900 | 1200 | 3500 | 76 |
| SX Crew c/c | 48,700 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 1910 | 1190 | 3500 | 76 |
| SX Crew p/u | 47,900 | I4TD/3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | 2025 | 1075 | 3500 | 76 |
| SX Crew p/u | 49,900 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2035 | 1065 | 3500 | 76 |
| LS-M Crew p/u | 51,900 | I4TD/3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | 2020 | 1080 | 3500 | 76 |
| LS-M Crew p/u | 53,000 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2030 | 1070 | 3500 | 76 |
| LS-U Crew p/u | 54,900 | I4TD/3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | 2035 | 1065 | 3500 | 76 |
| LS-U Crew p/u | 56,900 | i4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2045 | 1055 | 3500 | 76 |
| X-Terrain Crew p/u | 62,900 | I4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2130 | 970 | 3500 | 76 |

### MU-X



Isuzu's seven-seat wagon based on the D-MAX ute underpinnings, but with a smooth-riding coil-spring rear suspension. Uses Isuzu's respected 3.0-litre TD engine.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LS-M | 53,900 | L4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2092 | 658 | 3500 | 80 |
| LS-U | 55,900 | L4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2142 | 608 | 3500 | 80 |
| LS-T | 65,900 | L4TD/3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2157 | 593 | 3500 | 80 |

## JEEP

5-year/unlimited km **www.jeep.com.au**

### WRANGLER

JL Wrangler has true off-road credentials and great versatility. In Rubicon-spec, the Wrangler is an absolute off-road weapon.

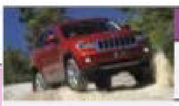
| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sport S (2-door) | 51,950 | V6/3.6 | A8 | 347 | 209 | 1762 | 551 | 1497 | 66 |
| Overland (2-door) | 61,450 | V6/3.6 | A8 | 347 | 209 | 1900 | 560 | 2495 | 81 |
| Night Eagle (4D) | 60,950 | V6/3.6 | A8 | 347 | 209 | 1762 | 551 | 1497 | 66 |
| Overland (4-door) | 65,950 | V6/3.6 | A8 | 347 | 209 | 1900 | 560 | 2495 | 81 |
| Rubicon (4-door) | 67,450 | V6/3.6 | A8 | 347 | 209 | 1992 | 570 | 2495 | 81 |
| Rubicon (2-dr) | 64,950 | V6/3.6 | A8 | 347 | 209 | 1900 | 550 | 1947 | 66 |

### CHEROKEE

The MY19 update for the KL Cherokee – the fourth generation of the series – included a design facelift, modern in-vehicle tech and autonomous emergency braking across the range.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Longitude | 41,950 | V6/3.2 | A9 | 315 | 200 | 1780 | 678 | 2200 | 60 |
| Limited | 46,950 | V6/3.2 | A9 | 315 | 200 | 1806 | 652 | 2200 | 60 |
| Trailhawk | 48,450 | V6/3.2 | A9 | 315 | 200 | 1889 | 605 | 2200 | 60 |

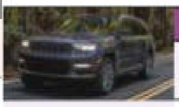
### GRAND CHEROKEE



Jeep's Grand Cherokee runs a grunty Pentastar V6, efficient 3.0TD V6, or the Hemi V8. Quadra-lift air suspension for Limited and Overland, rather than coils. Five seats and tight luggage area.

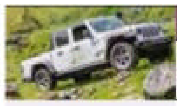
| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Laredo | 52,950 | V6/3.6 | A8 | 347 | 213 | 2084 | 865 | 2812 | 93 |
| Laredo TDV6 | 57,950 | V6/3.0TD | A8 | 570 | 184 | 2267 | 682 | 3500 | 93 |
| Limited | 63,950 | V6/3.6 | A8 | 347 | 213 | 2169 | 780 | 2812 | 93 |
| Limited TDV6 | 69,950 | V6/3.0TD | A8 | 570 | 184 | 2281 | 688 | 3500 | 93 |
| Trailhawk | 75,950 | V6/3.0TD | A8 | 570 | 184 | 2300 | 650 | 3500 | 93 |
| Overland TDV6 | 79,450 | V6/3.0TD | A8 | 570 | 184 | 2415 | 534 | 3500 | 93 |
| Summit | 85,950 | V6/3.0TD | A8 | 570 | 184 | 2327 | 622 | 3500 | 93 |
| SRT | 92,450 | V8/6.4 | A8 | 624 | 344 | 2289 | 612 | 2949 | 93 |
| Trackhawk | 134,950 | V8/6.2 | A8 | 868 | 522 | 2399 | 535 | 2949 | 93 |

### GRAND CHEROKEE L



First model in the new Grand Cherokee line up is the three row, 7-seat L. Only offered in Australia with the 3.6-litre Pentastar V6 petrol engine, there 's a choice of 4-wheel drive systems.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Night Eagle | 82,250 | V6/3.6P | A8 | 344 | 210 | 2190 | N/A | 2813 | 104 |
| Limited | 87,950 | V6/3.6P | A8 | 344 | 210 | 2190 | N/A | 2813 | 104 |
| Summit Reserve | 115,450 | V6/3.6P | A8 | 344 | 210 | 2270 | N/A | 2268 | 104 |

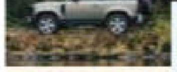


### GLADIATOR

Jeep's double-cab pick-up is finally here in two spec levels, with the Pentastar V6 and 8-speed auto in both. The Night Eagle is the entry level  while the Rubicon is the hardcore off-roader.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Night Eagle | 68,450 | V6/3.6P | A8 | 347 | 209 | 2104 | 693 | 2721 | 83 |
| Rubicon | 76,450 | V6/3.6P | A8 | 347 | 209 | 2215 | 693 | 2721 | 83 |

## LAND ROVER www.landrover.com.au



### DEFENDER 90

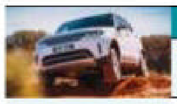
Defender 90 range closely mimics the 110 wagon range but in a shorter three-door wagon body. Right from the four-cylinder petrol motors, through the various diesels, and up to the stonking V8.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D90 P300 | $80,540 | I4/2.0P | A8 | 400 | 221 | 2074 | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D90 S P300 | $88,470 | I4/2.0P | A8 | 400 | 221 | 2074 | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D90 S D250 | $95,590 | I6/3.0D | A8 | 570 | 183 | 2303 | 667 | 3500 | 89 |
| D90 SE P400 | $105,690 | I6/3.0P | A8 | 550 | 294 | 2141 | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D90 X P400 | $145,700 | I6/3.0P | A8 | 550 | 294 | 2141 | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D90 P525 | $215,480 | V8/5.0P | A8 | 625 | 386 | 2470 | N/A | 3000 | 90 |

### DEFENDER 110

A Defender by name only. The new wagon from Land Rover is all-new and shares nothing with its predecessor. Still a bare-bones 4x4 with plenty of ability, just now wearing a shiny new suit.

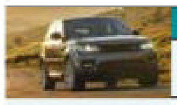
| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| P300 | 84,350 | I4/2.0p | A8 | 400 | 221 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P400 S | 99,500 | I6/3.0p | A8 | 550 | 294 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D300 SE | 104,000 | I6/3.0d | A8 | 650 | 220 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P400 SE | 111,400 | I6/3.0p | A8 | 550 | 294 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P400 HSE | 129,900 | I6/3.0p | A8 | 550 | 294 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D300 HSE | 123,050 | I6/3,0d | A8 | 650 | 220 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| D300 X | 151,000 | I6/3.0d | A8 | 650 | 220 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P400 X | 153,200 | I6/3.0p | A8 | 550 | 294 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |
| P525 V8 | 226,500 | V9/5.0p | A8 | 625 | 386 | N/A | N/A | 3500 | 90 |



### DISCOVERY

Land Rover Discovery combines excellent on-road dynamics with impressive off-road capability. Strong performance comes courtesy of state-of-the-art four-cylinder and V6 turbo-diesel engines.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| D300 S | 99,900 | I6TD/3.0 | A8 | 650 | 221 | 2109 | 831 | 3500 | 89 |
| D300 SE | 106,100 | I6TD/3.0 | A8 | 650 | 221 | 2109 | 831 | 3500 | 89 |
| D300 HSE | 113,700 | I6TD/3.0 | A8 | 650 | 221 | 2109 | 831 | 3500 | 89 |
| D300 S RDynamic | 105,200 | I6TD/3.0 | A8 | 650 | 221 | 2109 | 831 | 3500 | 89 |
| D300 SE Dynamic | 111,400 | I6TD/3.0 | A8 | 650 | 221 | 2236 | 814 | 3500 | 89 |
| D300 HSE Dynam | 118,600 | I6TD/3.0 | A8 | 650 | 221 | 2236 | 814 | 3500 | 89 |
| P360 S RDynamic | 105,200 | I6TP/3.0 | A8 | 500 | 265 | 2236 | 814 | 3500 | 89 |
| D360 SE Dynamic | 111,400 | I6TP/3.0 | A8 | 500 | 265 | 2236 | 814 | 3500 | 89 |
| D360 HSE Dynam | 118,600 | I6TP/3.0 | A8 | 500 | 265 | 2236 | 814 | 3500 | 89 |



### RANGE ROVER SPORT

Rangie Sport is available with four-, six- and eight-cylinder diesel engines, a PHEV or a stonking supercharged petrol V8. It delivers performance luxury and genuine off-road capabiltiy.

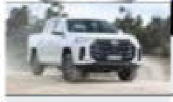
| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Si4 SE | 105,759 | L4TP/2.0 | A8 | 400 | 221 | 2027 | 873 | 3000 | 104 |
| Si4 PHEV SE | 134,289 | L4TP/2.0 | A8 | 640 | 297 | 2415 | 785 | 2500 | 91 |
| Si4 PHEV HSE | 149,598 | L4TP/2.0 | A8 | 400 | 221 | 2415 | 785 | 2500 | 91 |
| V8 HSE Dynamic | 175,259 | V8SP/5.0 | A8 | 625 | 386 | 2252 | 848 | 3500 | 104 |
| V8 Autobiography | 204,929 | V8SP/5.0 | A8 | 625 | 386 | 2252 | 848 | 3500 | 104 |
| SVR | 238,829 | V8SP/5.0 | A8 | 700 | 423 | 2239 | 761 | 3000 | 104 |
| TDV6 SE (183) | 113,131 | V6TD/3.0 | A8 | 600 | 183 | 2159 | 891 | 3500 | 86 |
| SDV6 SE (225) | 122,631 | V6TD/3.0 | A8 | 700 | 225 | 2159 | 891 | 3500 | 86 |
| SDV6 HSE | 139,331 | V6TD/3.0 | A8 | 700 | 225 | 2159 | 891 | 3500 | 86 |
| SDV6 HSE Dyn | 146,231 | V6TD/3.0 | A8 | 700 | 225 | 2159 | 891 | 3500 | 86 |
| SDV6 Autobio | 179,401 | V6TD/3.0 | A8 | 700 | 225 | 2159 | 891 | 3500 | 86 |
| SDV8 HSE | 152,459 | V8TD/4.4 | A8 | 740 | 250 | 2344 | 856 | 3500 | 86 |
| SDV8 HSE Dyn | 159,759 | V8TD/4.4 | A8 | 740 | 250 | 2344 | 856 | 3500 | 86 |

### RANGE ROVER

Land Rover combines supreme luxury and off-road capability in the Rangie. More power, less weight and better economy are just some of the improvements to the über-roader.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| SDV6 Vogue | 196,102 | V6TD/3.0 | A8 | 625 | 202 | 2328 | 802 | 3500 | 86 |
| SDV8 Vogue | 212,195 | V8TD/4.4 | A8 | 740 | 250 | 2570 | 720 | 3500 | 86 |
| SDV8 Vogue SE | 230,795 | V8TD/4.4 | A8 | 740 | 250 | 2570 | 720 | 3500 | 86 |
| SDV8 Auto SWB | 261,310 | V8TD/4.4 | A8 | 740 | 250 | 2570 | 720 | 3500 | 86 |
| I6 Vogue | 201,395 | I6TP/3.0 | A8 | 550 | 294 | 2342 | 798 | 3500 | 104 |
| Si4 PHEV | 211,925 | I4TP/2.0 | A8 | 400 | 221 | 2577 | 633 | 2500 | 90 |
| V8 Auto SWB | 274,210 | V8SP/5.0 | A8 | 625 | 386 | 2450 | 710 | 3500 | 104 |
| V8 SVAuto Dyn SWB | 346,170 | V8SP/5.0 | A8 | 700 | 416 | 2591 | 569 | 3500 | 104 |
| SDV8 Auto LWB | 271,310 | V8TD/4.4 | A8 | 740 | 250 | 2658 | 682 | 3500 | 86 |
| SDV8 SVAuto LWB | 377,170 | V8TD/4.4 | A8 | 740 | 250 | 2658 | 682 | 3500 | 86 |
| V8 Auto LWB | 284,410 | V8SP/5.0 | A8 | 625 | 386 | 2518 | 682 | 3500 | 104 |
| V8 SVAuto LWB | 403,670 | V8SP/5.0 | A8 | 700 | 416 | 2673 | 527 | 3500 | 104 |

## LDV 7-year/200,000km www.ldvautomotive.com.au

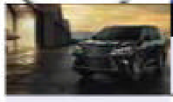


### T60

Chinese ute brings five-star safety to the budget-priced dual-cab segment. Revamped in 2021, with the Pro variants bringing more power and redesigned front-end.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Max Pro (manual) | 41,042 | I4/2.0 | M6 | 500 | 160 | N/A | 935 | 3000 | 73 |
| Max Pro (auto) | 43,148 | I4/2.0 | A8 | 500 | 160 | N/A | 925 | 3000 | 73 |
| Max Luxe (manual) | 45,779 | I4/2.0 | M6 | 500 | 160 | N/A | 935 | 3000 | 73 |
| Max Luxe (auto) | 47,884 | I4/2.0 | A8 | 500 | 160 | 2900 | 925 | 3000 | 73 |
| Mega Tub | 49,463 | I4/2.0 | A8 | 500 | 160 | N/A | N/A | 3000 | 73 |

## LEXUS 4-year/100,000km www.lexus.com.au



### LX

Take one Land Cruiser 200, give it a nose job, a whopping 5.7-litre petrol V8 and bunch of extra tech gizmos and voila, you have the Lexus LX570.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| LX570 | 142,431 | V8/5.7 | A8 | 530 | 270 | 2740 | 705 | 3500 | 138 |
| LX570 S | 167,731 | V8/5.7 | A8 | 530 | 270 | 2740 | TBC | 3500 | 138 |
| LX450 D | 135,171 | V8/4.5 | A6 | 650 | 200 | 2660 | TBC | 3500 | 93 |

## MAHINDRA 5-year/unlimited www.mahindra.com.au

### PIK-UP

Now has standard airbags and ABS, and recently received a new, more powerful engine. Available in single- and dual-cab configuration with or without a tub. Easy!

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Single c/c | 30,990* | L4TD/2.2 | M6 | 330 | 103 | 1780 | 1370 | 2500 | 80 |
| Dual c/c | 34,500* | L4TD/2.2 | M6 | 330 | 103 | 1940 | 1210 | 2500 | 80 |
| Dual p/u | 35,500* | L4TD/2.2 | M6 | 330 | 103 | 2080 | 1070 | 2500 | 80 |
| Dual p/u S10 | 42,990* | L4TD/2.2 | M6 | 330 | 103 | 2080 | 1070 | 2500 | 80 |

*This is a nationwide drive-away price, not a list price, and includes on-roads.

## MAZDA 5-year/unlimited km www.mazda.com.au

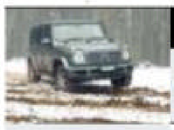
### BT-50

All new BT-50 steps away from its Ford roots, as Mazda partnered with Isuzu for the new model. That means Isuzu powertrains and class-leading safety wrapped in a sveldt Mazda skin.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dual XS p/u | 51,210 | I4TD.1.9 | A6 | 350 | 110 | 1935 | 1165 | 3500 | 76 |
| Single XT c/c | 41,650 | I4TD.3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | | 1186 | 3500 | 76 |
| Single XT c/c | 44,150 | I4TD.3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | | 1186 | 3500 | 76 |
| Extra XT c/c | 45,150 | I4TD.3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | | 1135 | 3500 | 76 |
| Extra XT c/c | 47,650 | I4TD.3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | | 1135 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual XT c/c | 51,960 | I4TD.3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | | 1096 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual XT c/c | 49,460 | I4TD.3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | | 1106 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual XT p/u | 50,860 | I4TD.3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | | 1095 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual XT p/u | 53,360 | I4TD.3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | | 1090 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual XTR c/c | 55,910 | I4TD.3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 1910 | 1190 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual XTR p/u | 54,810 | I4TD.3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | | 1080 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual XTR p/u | 57,310 | I4TD.3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | | 1070 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual GT p/u | 57,090 | I4TD.3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | | 1075 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual GT p/u | 60,090 | I4TD.3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | | 1065 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual SP p/u | 63,090 | I4TD.3.0 | M6 | 450 | 140 | 2198 | 902 | 3500 | 76 |
| Dual SP p/u | 66,090 | I4TD.3.0 | A6 | 450 | 140 | 2208 | 892 | 3500 | 76 |

## MERCEDES

3-year/200,000km **www.mercedes-benz.com.au**



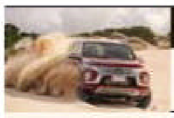
### G-CLASS

With triple diff locks, long-travel coil suspension and rugged construction, Merc's Gelandewagen is off-road heritage writ large. Unfortunately, so is the price tag on an updated 30-year-old design.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| G63 AMG | 259,600 | V8/4.0 | A9 | 850 | 430 | 2560 | 640 | 3500 | 100 |
| G400d | 233,776 | I6/2.9 | A9 | 700 | 243 | 2489 | 661 | 3500 | 112 |

## MITSUBISHI

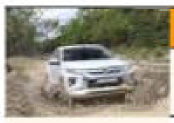
7-year/150,000km **www.mitsubishi-motors.com.au**



### PAJERO SPORT

Pajero Sport replaced the Challenger in Mitsubishi's 4x4 range. It's still on a Triton ute chassis but with rear coils under the back and bespoke bodywork. 2020 refresh added Dynamic Shield front end.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GLX (5-seat) | 49,940 | L4TD/2.4 | A8 | 430 | 133 | 2045 | 730 | 3100 | 68 |
| GLS (7s) | 55,190 | L4TD/2.4 | A8 | 430 | 133 | 2105 | 670 | 3100 | 68 |
| GLS Deluxe (7s) | 57,440 | L4TD/2.4 | A8 | 430 | 133 | 2060 | 715 | 3100 | 68 |
| Exceed (7s) | 60,690 | L4TD/2.4 | A8 | 430 | 133 | 2110 | 665 | 3100 | 68 |
| GSR (7s) | 62,440 | L4TD/2.4 | A8 | 430 | 133 | 2125 | 650 | 3100 | 68 |



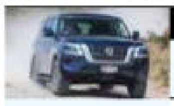
### TRITON

MR Triton consists of a four-model line-up that tops out with the GSR. All models get a 2.4-litre, turbocharged diesel engine with a six-speed transmission.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GLX Single c/c | 33,240 | L4TD/2.4 | M6 | 430 | 133 | 1660 | 1235 | 3000 | 75 |
| GLX Single c/c | 35,740 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 430 | 133 | 1665 | 1235 | 3000 | 75 |
| GLX Club c/c | 35,740 | L4TD/2.4 | M6 | 430 | 133 | 1765 | 1135 | 3000 | 75 |
| GLX ADAS Club c/c | 39,040 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 430 | 133 | 1780 | 1120 | 3000 | 75 |
| GLX Dual c/c | 36,490 | L4TD/2.4 | M6 | 430 | 133 | 1795 | 1105 | 3100 | 75 |
| GLX ADAS Dual c/c | 39,790 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 430 | 133 | 1795 | 1105 | 3100 | 75 |
| GLX+ Club p/u | 41,740 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 430 | 133 | 1930 | 970 | 3100 | 75 |
| GLX Dual p/u | 37,490 | L4TD/2.4 | M6 | 430 | 133 | 1920 | 980 | 3100 | 75 |
| GLX Dual p/u | 39,990 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 430 | 133 | 1920 | 980 | 3100 | 75 |
| GLX ADAS Dual p/u | 38,540 | L4TD/2.4 | M6 | 430 | 133 | 1951 | 949 | 3100 | 75 |
| GLX ADAS Dual p/u | 41,040 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 430 | 133 | 1956 | 944 | 3100 | 75 |
| GLX+ Dual p/u | 40,990 | L4TD/2.4 | M6 | 430 | 133 | 1915 | 985 | 3100 | 75 |
| GLX+ Dual p/u | 43,490 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 430 | 133 | 1915 | 985 | 3100 | 75 |
| GLX-R | 41,990 | L4TD/2.4 | M6 | 430 | 133 | N/A | N/A | 3100 | 75 |
| GLX-R | 44,490 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 430 | 133 | N/A | N/A | 3100 | 75 |
| GLS Dual p/u | 45,440 | L4TD/2.4 | M6 | 430 | 133 | 1935 | 965 | 3100 | 75 |
| GLS Dual p/u | 47,940 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 430 | 133 | 1935 | 965 | 3100 | 75 |
| GLS Premium | 52,790 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 430 | 133 | 2042 | 848 | 3100 | 75 |
| GSR | 55,690 | L4TD/2.4 | A6 | 430 | 133 | 1999 | 901 | 3100 | 75 |

## NISSAN

5-year/unlimited km **www.nissan.com.au**



### PATROL Y62

In a segment that drinks diesel, top-spec Patrol is available in V8-petrol guise only. Fully independent suspension is backed by electronic traction aids. Updated model launched late in 2019.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ti | 82,160 | V8/5.6 | A7 | 560 | 298 | 2812 | 688 | 3500 | 140 |
| Ti-L | 95,115 | V8/5.6 | A7 | 560 | 298 | 2708 | 746 | 3500 | 140 |

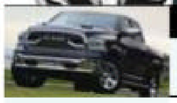
### NAVARA D23

The latest iteration of Nissan's D23 Navara ute range arrives with a bolder look and a revised line-up. Pro-4X Warrior has to be the best navara produced ever!.

| | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Single SL c/c | 39,300 | L4TD/2.3 | M6 | 403 | 120 | 1614 | 1296 | 3500 | 80 |
| King SL c/c | 45,800 | L4TD/2.3 | A7 | 403 | 120 | 1727 | 1183 | 3500 | 80 |
| King ST-X p/u | 57,695 | L4TD/2.3 | A7 | 450 | 140 | 1908 | 1002 | 3500 | 80 |
| King SL p/u | 47,600 | L4TD/2.3 | A7 | 450 | 140 | 1941 | 969 | 3500 | 80 |
| King ST-X p/u | 53,750 | L4TD/2.3 | A7 | 450 | 140 | 1944 | 966 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dual SL c/c | 44,800 | L4TD/2.3 | M6 | 403 | 120 | 1759 | 1147 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dual SL p/u | 46,600 | L4TD/2.3 | M6 | 450 | 140 | 1823 | 1087 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dual SL p/u | 47,400 | L4TD/2.3 | A7 | 403 | 120 | 1923 | 987 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dual SL p/u | 47,550 | L4TD/2.3 | A7 | 450 | 140 | 1928 | 982 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dual ST-X p/u | 55,770 | L4TD/2.3 | M6 | 450 | 140 | 1917 | 993 | 3500 | 80 |
| Dual ST-X p/u | 58,270 | L4TD/2.3 | A7 | 450 | 140 | 1921 | 989 | 3500 | 80 |
| PRO-4X | 58,155 | L4TD/2.3 | M6 | 450 | 140 | 2186 | 724 | 3500 | 80 |
| PRO-4X Warrior | 69,990 | L4TD/2.3 | A7 | 450 | 140 | 2151 | 1019 | 3500 | 80 |

## RAM

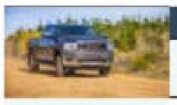
3-year/100,000 km **www.ramtrucks.com.au**



### RAM 1500

You'll find Ram trucks here from various importers, but the official distributor is Ram Trucks Australia. Currently selling the DS Ram 1500, with the newer DT model due to arrive shortly.

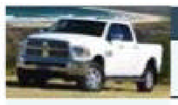
| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Express Quad cab | 79,950 | V8P/5.7 | A8 | 556 | 291 | 2605 | 845 | 4500 | 121 |
| Express Crew Cab | 89,950 | V8P/5.7 | A8 | 556 | 291 | 2620 | 830 | 4500 | 121 |
| Warlock Crew C | 104,450 | V8P/5.7 | A8 | 556 | 291 | 2650 | 830 | 4500 | 121 |
| Laramie Crew | 104,950 | V8P/5.7 | A8 | 556 | 291 | 2650 | 800 | 4500 | 98 |
| Laramie Crew | 109,950 | V6TD/3.0 | A8 | 569 | 179 | 2715 | 735 | 3500 | 98 |



### RAM 2500

The 2500 is the first of the heavy duty Ram model and is only available in Laramie specification in Australia. Powered by the Cummins in-line six, the 2500 is a torque monster and towing champion.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2500 LAramie | 157,950 | I6d/6.7 | A6 | 1152 | 276 | 3660 | 835 | 4500 | 117 |



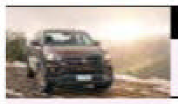
### RAM 3500

The 1500 is the standard model while the 2500 and 3500 Rams are the Heavy Duty versions packing HD drivelines, Cummins diesel engines and huge lowing capacities. New HD models also coming soon.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Laramie Crew | 162,950 | I6TD/6.7 | A6 | 1152 | 276 | 3596 | 1713 | 6170* | 132 |

## SSANGYONG

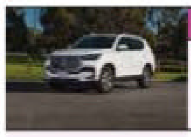
7-year/unlimited km **www.ssangyong.com.au**



### MUSSO

Thrifty South Korean dual-cab has been reborn with more subdued styling and an unbeatable warranty. XLV variant adds segment-topping tray length to the line-up's killer pricing.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| EX | $30,490 | L4TD/2.2 | M6 | 420 | 133 | 2177 | 703 | 3500 | 75 |
| EX | $32,490 | L4TD/2.2 | A6 | 420 | 133 | 2192 | 688 | 3500 | 75 |
| ELX | $35,990 | L4TD/2.2 | A6 | 420 | 133 | 2192 | 688 | 3500 | 75 |
| Ultimate | $39,990 | L4TD/2.2 | A6 | 420 | 133 | 2192 | 688 | 3500 | 75 |
| ELX XLV | $33,990 | L4TD/2.2 | M6 | 420 | 133 | 2160 | 1025 | 3500 | 75 |
| ELX XLV | $35,990 | L4TD/2.2 | A6 | 420 | 133 | 2170 | 1025 | 3500 | 75 |
| Ultimate XLV | $39,990 | L4TD/2.2 | A6 | 420 | 133 | 2170 | 880 | 3500 | 75 |
| Ultimate+ XLV | $43,990 | L4TD/2.2 | A6 | 420 | 133 | 2170 | 880 | 3500 | 75 |



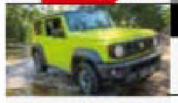
### REXTON

After a two-year hiatus, the South Korean manufacturer launched its two-prong attack on the 4x4 wagon market. The family rig is loaded with kit and comes with a lean price tag.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ELX | 47,990 | L4TD/2.2 | A7 | 444 | 148 | 2233 | 727 | 3500 | 70 |
| Ultimate | 54,990* | L4TD/2.2 | A7 | 444 | 148 | 2233 | 727 | 3500 | 70 |

## SUZUKI

3-year/100,000km **www.suzuki.com.au**



### JIMNY

Pint-sized cult classic returns in fourth-gen guise. Live axles front and rear and retro styling means it will remain a favourite on the off-road scene.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3-door Hardtop | 28,490 | L4/1.5 | M5 | 130 | 75 | 1095 | 340 | 1300 | 40 |
| 3-door Hardtop | 29,990 | L4/1.5 | A4 | 130 | 75 | 1110 | 325 | 1300 | 40 |

## TOYOTA

5-year/unlimited km **www.toyota.com.au**

### PRADO

The 150 Prado has been Australia's best-selling 4x4 wagon for the better part of 10 years. In 2018, a heap of safety features were added to all automatic models, from the base-model GX up to the Kakadu.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GX | 60,830 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2150 | 835 | 3000 | 150 |
| GXL | 67,530 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2325 | 665 | 3000 | 150 |
| VX | 77,157 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2435 | 555 | 3000 | 150 |
| Kakadu | 87,807 | L4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2435 | 555 | 3000 | 150 |

### FORTUNER

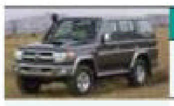
Toyota's Hilux-based seven-seat wagon competes with Ford Everest, Mitsubishi Pajero Sport, Isuzu MU-X and Holden Trailblazer. Smaller than a Prado but still a proper 4x4 wagon

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GX | 49,080 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2130 | 640 | 2800 | 80 |
| GXL | 54,350 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2125 | 640 | 2800 | 80 |
| Crusade | 61,410 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2155 | 640 | 2800 | 80 |

## LAND CRUISER 300 SERIES

It's out with the V8s and in with an all-new V6 diesel engine in the new 300 Series Land Cruiser. There are now six models in the range including the new GR Sport and Sahara ZX models.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| GX | 89,990 | V6TD/3.3L | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2495 | 785 | 3500 | 110 |
| GXL | 101,790 | V6TD/3.3L | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2580 | 700 | 3500 | 110 |
| VX | 113,990 | V6TD/3.3L | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2630 | 650 | 3500 | 110 |
| Sahara | 131,190 | V6TD/3.3L | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2630 | 650 | 3500 | 110 |
| GR Sport | 137,790 | V6TD/3.3L | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2630 | 650 | 3500 | 110 |
| Sahara ZX | 138,790 | V6TD/3.3L | A10 | 700 | 227 | 2610 | 670 | 3500 | 110 |



## LAND CRUISER 70

The 70 Series Cruiser's torquey TDV8 makes it a load-hauler extraordinaire. Available as long-wheelbase Troopie or five-door, mid-wheelbase wagon.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WorkMate Troopy | 72,950 | V8TD/4.5 | M5 | 430 | 151 | 2320 | 980 | 3500 | 180 |
| GXL Troopy | 76,150 | V8TD/4.5 | M5 | 430 | 151 | 2335 | 965 | 3500 | 180 |
| WorkMate wagon | 69,000 | V8TD/4.5 | M5 | 430 | 151 | 2220 | 780 | 3500 | 90 |
| GXL Wagon | 73,100 | V8TD/4.5 | M5 | 430 | 151 | 2190 | 810 | 3500 | 90 |

## LAND CRUISER 70 CAB-CHASSIS

With its TDV8 powerplant, the Land Cruiser ute is better than ever. Optional Toyota diff locks make it super-capable off-road.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WorkMate single c/c | 70,550 | V8TD/4.5 | M5 | 430 | 151 | 2045 | 1003 | 3500 | 180 |
| GX single c/c | 72,550 | V8TD/4.5 | M5 | 430 | 151 | 2010 | 1013 | 3500 | 180 |
| GXL single c/c | 74,650 | V8TD/4.5 | M5 | 430 | 151 | 2020 | 1023 | 3500 | 180 |

## LAND CRUISER 79 DOUBLE CAB

Tough-as-nails and with room for five, the LC79 dual-cab has the same V8 manual torque and diff-lock option as other 70s to make for an almost unstoppable off-road workhorse.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| WorkMate dual c/c | 73,100 | V8TD/4.5 | M5 | 430 | 151 | 2205 | 900 | 3500 | 130 |
| GXL dual c/c | 77,200 | V8TD/4.5 | M5 | 430 | 151 | 2215 | 900 | 3500 | 130 |

## HILUX

The N80 Hilux with a new 2.8-litre engine, six-speed transmissions and a beefed-up towing capacity. A facelift and more power for the 2021 model adds to its appeal.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| W'Mate Single c/c | 39,520 | I4TD/2.4 | M6 | 400 | 110 | 1775 | 1225 | 3200 | 80 |
| W'Mate Extra c/c | 45,220 | I4TD/2.4 | A6 | 400 | 110 | 1890 | 1110 | 3000 | 80 |
| W'Mate Dual c/c | 47,290 | I4TD/2.4 | A6 | 400 | 110 | 1915 | 1085 | 3000 | 80 |
| W'Mate Dual p/u | 46,790 | I4TD/2.4 | M6 | 400 | 110 | 2045 | 955 | 3200 | 80 |
| W'Mate Dual p/u | 48,790 | I4TD/2.4 | A6 | 400 | 110 | 2045 | 955 | 3000 | 80 |
| SR Single c/c | 42,590 | I4TD/2.8 | M6 | 420 | 150 | 1795 | 1205 | 3500 | 80 |
| SR Single c/c | 44,590 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 1795 | 1205 | 3200 | 80 |
| SR Extra c/c | 46,250 | I4TD/2.8 | M6 | 420 | 150 | 1890 | 1110 | 3500 | 80 |
| SR Extra c/c | 48,250 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 1895 | 1155 | 3200 | 80 |
| SR Dual c/c | 48,510 | I4TD/2.8 | M6 | 420 | 150 | 1955 | 1045 | 3500 | 80 |
| SR Dual c/c | 50,660 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 1955 | 1045 | 3200 | 80 |
| SR Dual p/u | 50,010 | I4TD/2.8 | M6 | 420 | 150 | 2050 | 950 | 3500 | 80 |
| SR Dual p/u | 52,010 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2045 | 955 | 3200 | 80 |
| SR5 Extra p/u | 58,400 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2045 | 1005 | 3200 | 80 |
| SR5 Dual p/u | 57,920 | I4TD/2.8 | M6 | 420 | 150 | 2040 | 960 | 3500 | 80 |
| SR5 Dual p/u | 59,920 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2045 | 955 | 3200 | 80 |
| Rogue Dual p/u | 70,200 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2174 | 826 | 3200 | 80 |
| Rugged X Dual p/u | 69,990 | I4TD/2.8 | A6 | 500 | 150 | 2252 | 748 | 3200 | 80 |

# VOLKSWAGEN

5-year/unlimited km **www.volkswagen.com.au**

## AMAROK

Amarok is an impressive all-rounder with two Ute Of The Year wins. Bi-turbo engine punches above its weight and is very economical. TDV6 is a powerhouse.

| | PRICE | ENGINE | TRANS | TORQUE | POWER | WEIGHT | LOAD | TOWING | FUEL |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TDI400 Core c/c | 43,090 | L4TD/2.0 | M6 | 400 | 132 | 1865 | 1018 | 3000 | 80 |
| TDI400 Core | 44,590 | L4TD/2.0 | M6 | 400 | 132 | 1873 | 1018 | 3000 | 80 |
| TDI420 Core c/c | 46,090 | L4TD/2.0 | A8 | 420 | 132 | 1865 | 1018 | 3000 | 80 |
| TDI420 Core | 47,590 | L4TD/2.0 | A8 | 420 | 132 | 1873 | 1018 | 3000 | 80 |
| TDI420 Core Plus | 51,590 | L4TD/2.0 | A8 | 420 | 132 | 1978 | 988 | 3000 | 80 |
| TDI550 Core | 52,590 | V6TD/3.0 | A8 | 550 | 165 | 2091 | 989 | 3000 | 80 |
| Sportline 550 V6 | 56,590 | V6TD/3.0 | A8 | 550 | 165 | 2078 | 1002 | 3500 | 80 |
| Highline 550 V6 | 61,090 | V6TD/3.0 | A8 | 550 | 165 | 2169 | 911 | 3500 | 80 |
| Ultimate 550 V6 | 68,490 | V6TD/3.0 | A8 | 550 | 165 | 2216 | 864 | 3500 | 80 |
| Ultimate 580 V6 | 72,790 | V6TD/3.0 | A8 | 580 | 190 | 2196 | 884 | 3500 | 80 |
| W580S | 79,990 | V6TD/3.0 | A8 | 580 | 190 | 2228 | 848 | 3500 | 80 |

# 2023 MAZDA BT-50 XTR LE JOINS THE RANGE

MAZDA will introduce a limited-edition BT-50 XTR LE to its ute line-up, priced at $64,295 before on-road costs. Based on the XTR variant, the LE is $6685 more expensive and adds three genuine accessories – a single-hooped polished silver bullbar at the front, polished silver sports bar with an integrated LED brake light at the back, and a more durable heavy-duty tub liner.

Mazda says these accessory package additions represent a $2500 saving compared to buying separately. All accessories are backed by a five-year warranty. The front bullbar integrates with the ute's safety systems and there is no adverse effect on engine or transmission cooling.

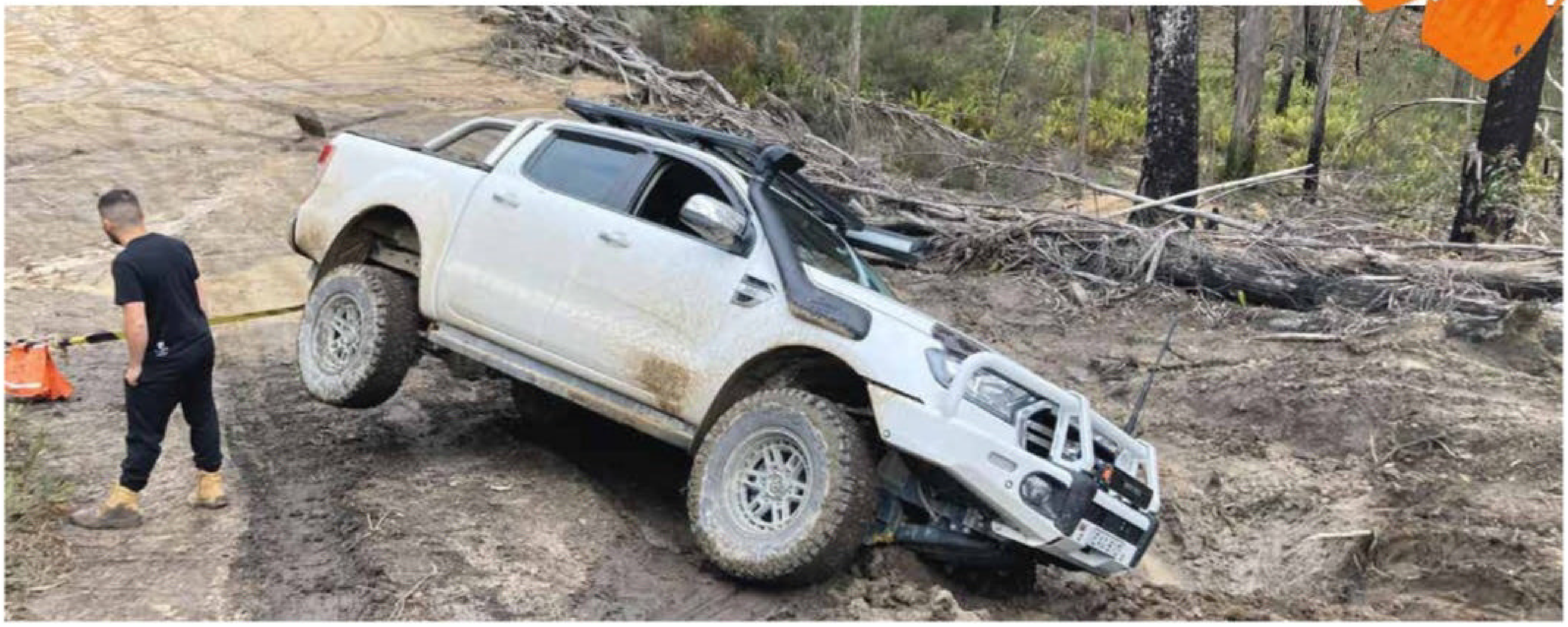
The BT-50 XTR LE is, as the naming suggests, a limited edition – with only 300 units coming to Australia. However, a Mazda spokesperson confirmed this initial allocation will be reviewed based on customer demand.

The BT-50 XTR LE is sold exclusively as a dual-cab 4x4 with an auto transmission and Ingot Silver metallic paint. It uses a 3.0-litre turbo-diesel engine producing 140kW and 450Nm, with a 3500kg braked towing capacity and 1070kg payload. The XTR LE is the third variant to join the line-up since the new third-gen model released in 2020, which moved to being heavily based on the Isuzu D-MAX

# PARTING PIC

**SEND TO OUR FB PAGE: @4X4AUS**

We all have that one mate who manages to get in to strife on every 4x4 trip, whether they are the first one to get bogged, roll the car or just get lost. Well, here's your chance to show the world their embarrassing predicaments and give yourself a chance to win a $300 voucher for MAXTRAX recovery gear.



## CLIFFHANGER

## SANDRO TERLIZZI

**> LITHGOW, NEW SOUTH WALES**

SANDRO Terlizzi was out four-wheeling at Lithgow on the Zig Zags on a rainy day, when he spotted what he thought would be an easy path up a shaly hill.

"I didn't realise it was all hidden mud," Sandro told *4X4 Australia*. "I got halfway up, and then didn't go anywhere. I hit the brakes, but all the car did was slide back down."

Sandro knew there was a massive hole to his left at the bottom, so he attempted to avoid it. Unfortunately for Sandro and his 2019 XLT Ranger – with an OME two-inch lift, RAZR 33-inch tyres and a Safari Armax snorkel – the car started to slide out of control towards the hole.

"Photos don't really do it justice, but half the car fell in and I couldn't do anything. It was tilting back and forth and I worried it was going to tip," Sandro added.

Luckily, no damage was caused, and Sandro was able to rescue the rig by strapping up from behind on someone else's winch. A bunch of guys then jumped on the back of the car to add weight, to ensure it didn't tip whilst being pulled out.

When asked what advice he'd give to other travellers when faced with a similar predicament, Sandro said: "I think it was just the terrain that was unpredictable. I did see the hole on the way up, so it was a risky one, but it was the safest route out of the three or four that went up the hill."

**T&Cs**

- Voucher can only be redeemed through www.maxtrax.com.au
- When using the voucher, any outstanding balance can be paid as normal.
- If you don't spend the whole thing, the remaining balance can be used on your account in the future.
- The voucher will expire 3 years from the date of activation.

$300
GIFT VOUCHER

MAXXIS

TWICE AS SHARP!

RAZR

RAZR **MT772** AGGRESSIVE MUD TERRAIN TYRE

CUTTING EDGE ALL TERRAIN TYRE RAZR **AT811**

WWW.MAXXISTYRES.COM.AU

MAXXISTyresAustralia @Maxxis.Tyres.Australia Maxxis Tyres Australia

EVERYTHING
YOU NEED
THOR
Alu-Cab
THOR-76
go prepared

for a full range of 4x4 accessories visit our website

**www.ironman4x4.com**

IRONMAN 4X4

4X4ABC160123